THE LIFE
OF
SAINT PIUS THE FIFTH

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THE LIFE

OF

SAINT PIUS THE FIFTH,

AND OTHER SAINTS AND BLESSED

OF THE

Order of Friar Preachers.

BY

A FATHER OF THE SAME ORDER,

AUTHOR OF

"THE LIFE OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS" AND "LIVES OF SOME OF THE SONS OF ST. DOMINIC."

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How sweetly rest
Those spirits blest,
The saints of our dear Father's race!
Whose lives shone forth,
O'er all the earth,
In signs, and powers, and words of grace.
—*Antiphon from the Dominican Office of the Blessed Virgin.*

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APPROBATIONS.

Nos infrascripti Revisores Ord. Praed. prescriptis excudendis fidem facimus quod perlectum opusculum cujus titulum, "The Life of Saint Pius the Fifth, and other Saints and Blessed of the Order of Friar Preachers, by a Father of the same Order," compilatum, typis mandariposse censemus.

In quorum fidem his propria manu subscripsimus, Benetiæ, die 27 Novembris, 1885.

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PREFACE.

Seeing that this little book lays no claim to deep research, the author having simply narrated what he found, it would be out of place to tell the sources from whence the lives of the saints in this volume have been drawn. The work of the Bollandists, and several collections of Lives of Dominican saints have been mainly useful in writing this book. Yet it would be unfair not to acknowledge the author's debt to the Comte de Falloux, whose Life of Saint Pius the Fifth has been almost solely made use of in writing the sketch of the life of that saint.

This volume, as also the "Life of Saint Thomas Aquinas," and "Lives of some of the Sons of Saint Dominic," form part of what is intended to be a complete collection of Lives of all the Saints and Blessed of the First Order of Saint Dominic; written chiefly for the English speaking members of the three Orders, and also for all those who love to read the Lives of the Saints of God.

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ST. PIUS THE FIFTH.

ST. PIUS THE FIFTH.

May 5th.

CHAPTER I.

THE Order of Friar Preachers, founded by Saint Dominic, has drawn recruits from every condition in life. It has attracted to itself young men and maidens, innocent in virginal purity, taught the secrets of penance to thousands of sinners, has drawn into its ranks the learned, who dedicated their science to the service of God, and the ignorant, who, desirous of rising to degrees of sanctity, otherwise unattainable, donned the black scapular of the lay brother, and spent their lives ministering to the bodily and temporal wants of the more learned of the brethren of the Order. And in return, this holy Order, instead of

hiding the learning and holiness of its members in an impenetrable seclusion, has given to the world many remarkable examples of science, as well as holiness, in almost every sphere of life. The names of the eminent architects and painters of the Order of Saint Dominic dwell in the memory of every student of history. Philosophers and theologians are as numerous in its annals as the stars in the heavens. Thousands of missionaries have spread the glad tidings of Christ in all lands and to all peoples. Martyrs innumerable have watered the soil with their heart's blood. Where is the land which has not seen the white-robed Dominican searching for souls? And where the country in which they have not died for the faith? How many holy Bishops have been forced from their beloved monasteries by the voice of the Church, which has pressed the mitre on their unwilling brows, as a reward for their zeal and learning. And the sons of Saint Dominic have been placed by God on the highest throne in the world, the Chair of Saint Peter. Four Popes have shed lustre on the Dominican Order, while they ruled the Church of God

in justice and holiness: Peter of Tarentasia, under the title of Innocent 5th, called Blessed by the annalists of the Order, Nicolas Boccasini, known as Benedict 11th, declared Blessed by the Church, Benedict 13th, a member of the princely family of the Orsini, and Michael Ghislieri, known as Saint Pius the Fifth.

The latter was undoubtedly the most remarkable. This great Saint shows us an example of virtues suited for several states of life. He had the austerity of an anchorite, the burning zeal of an apostle, prudential governing powers of a faithful Christian Bishop, the learning of a Cardinal, and that combination of virtues and natural qualities necessary to make him a great and holy Pope. As a Bishop, he never ceased to be a religious. Clothed in the purple of the Roman Cardinalate, he did penance so severe that his rank might be no snare for the humility of his soul; with the tiara on his brow he was as humble as when a novice in his monastery, and yet as bold as a lion when the honor and glory of God called him to defend the Church.

This great Saint was born January 17th, 1504, at Bosco, a little town near Alexandria, in Piedmont, a province in the north of Italy. His father, Paul Ghislieri, belonged to a family which had once been one of the noble families of the city of Bologna. But in the civil wars of the fifteenth century the Ghislieri lost their wealth, and were banished by a popular sedition. Some fled to Rome, where they adopted the name of Consigliari, but others settled in Bosco, preserving their ancient name. At the end of the 15th century Paul Ghislieri, of Bosco, married Domenica Augeria, and to them, January 17th, 1504, was born a son, whom they named Michael, or according to some authors, Antoninus; the name of Michael having been given him when he entered the Dominican Order. Paul and his wife were poor, but very virtuous, and gave their son a Christian education.

They implanted principles of virtue and religion in his youthful mind, and by the regularity and holiness of their own lives showed him how to live as a true Christian. Their care and piety were richly rewarded. Mich-

ael grew up a pious and modest youth, and very devout, especially to the holy Mother of God. And while he increased in piety he began to show a great aptitude for study.

At the age of twelve he had already learned to desire a happiness higher than that which the enjoyments of life afford, and to long for the quiet contentment and undisturbed peace of the contemplative life. When he first felt attracted to the religious state, he prayed that God might open to him some way of following his attraction. There was no monastery at Bosco, and he was not acquainted with any religious. But one day two Dominicans passed through the town. Michael timidly accosted them, and very soon entered into conversation with them; and when they found that he had a vocation, they asked him if he would go with them, promising him, if he was thought worthy, that he should enter the novitiate. Michael ran to his parents, full of joy, and kneeling down, prayed them to give their consent and blessing. They readily gave permission, happy to have their child in so holy a state of life. Michael, therefore, accompanied the two

Fathers to Voghera, twenty miles from Bosco. In that monastery he served Mass every morning, and devoted the rest of the day to study, with such good will and so evident a zest, that the fathers took great pleasure in teaching him.

When sufficiently advanced he was sent to Vigevani to receive the habit and begin his novitiate; and there he made his profession, in the year 1519, at the age of 15.

When the Father Provincial, who received his vows at profession, asked him by what name he would like to be known in religion, he answered, "Brother Michael of Bosco." But the Father Provincial answered: "No one knows Bosco; in future you will be known as Michael the Alexandrian, because you were born in the neighborhood of Alexandria." This was the name by which he became known, and when he was created Cardinal he was called Cardinal Alexandrine.

After profession he studied philosophy in the monastery at Bologna, and later on theology—in both distinguishing himself—while at the same time he learned the divine science of prayer and contemplation. He

often said that prayer is a powerful means of acquiring knowledge, and that the more the soul is united to God by prayer the more it becomes capable of enriching itself and of enlightening others.

Hardly had he finished his course of philosophy and theology when he was thought capable of teaching. His treatment of theology was what one would look for from a Saint, and one of his biographers (F. John Baptist Feuillet) says that he mingled the thorns of Calvary with the thorns of theology. He was only twenty years old at this time, but such was the opinion formed of him that crowds of students attended his lectures from all parts of Italy.

He was ordained priest at Genoa, being then twenty-four years of age. In his sincere humility he thought himself unworthy to be a priest, and nothing but the authority of the Provincial could induce him to be ordained. Meditating on the fearful responsibilities of a Christian priest, and on the immaculate holiness required of those whose sacred office leads them daily to the altar, there to offer the sacrifice of the holy Mass, and whose

duty it is to administer God's holy sacraments, caused him to tremble lest he should be unworthy of an office so high, and with so fearful a responsibility attached to it. When the time of his ordination drew near he begged to remain a simple religious, free from the cares of the priesthood.

But God, who confers the office of priesthood on whom he pleases, fits them for their duties by sacramental graces, and the Father Provincial gently used his authority to command Brother Michael to set aside his fears, and, in holy obedience, to take upon himself that office for which his virtues and natural talents so eminently fitted him.

CHAPTER II.

SOON after his ordination he was sent to the Provincial chapter held at Parma, where he defended some theological theses, or propositions, against the heretical opinions of the Lutherans, at that time beginning to attract attention. He renewed his diligence in study, so that he might be more able to refute these dangerous errors. Nevertheless, his studies did not hinder him from assisting regularly at the divine office in the choir, nor from fulfilling the other pious duties of holy religion. He read some portion of the Life of Saint Dominic every day, in order to model his life on that of the founder of his beloved Order. He practised rigorous mortifications, and often took upon himself some menial duty, in order to acquire a spirit of humility. The time allowed for recreation he spent in charitable deeds, such as consoling the sad and weary, encouraging the feeble, and instructing the ignorant.

The fathers of the monastery, recognizing

his virtues, regularity of life, and natural capacities, twice elected him Prior of Vigevani, and he filled the same office in the monasteries of Soncino and Alba. As superior, he showed much firmness, tempered with sweetness, and it was thought a great happiness to live in the communities committed to his charge He had a very remarkable gift of directing souls of an untractable disposition. He often told his community that piety and knowledge are the two breasts from whence religious should draw the milk of devotion, without which the human heart and soul would cease to have an interior unction. "A monk," he would often say, "is like a fish, which cannot live out of its natural element." And he frequently reminded his religious that just as salt returns to water, its first substance, so a religious, that evangelical salt which God withdraws from the world, resumes its false maxims and evil vices when he re-enters it without sufficient cause.

When he was Prior in Lombardy, war and famine desolated the country. Three hundred soldiers arrived one day at the monastery to pillage it. Father Michael met them

without fear and received them as he would receive friendly guests, and by his kindness inspired them with such veneration, that although they remained a whole month in the monastery, they caused no trouble, and the usual monastic discipline and observances were never once interrupted. In fact, many of them went to office in choir, and took their meals with the fathers and brothers in the refectory, listening in deep silence to the brother who, according to monastic custom, read some pious book from a pulpit during meals.

His sermons persuaded many souls to lead a more holy life than is found among ordinary Christians. Among these was the Marquis of Guast, Governor of Milan, who chose him for his director, and made him the distributor of his alms. This duty necessitated a journey of twenty miles, which he always made on foot, carrying his bag on his shoulders, and the Marquis could never persuade him to ride, nor to buy a cloak to keep off the rain. He was very strict with himself and other religious on the observance of the vow of poverty. He maintained that this

vow ought to deprive religious of superfluities, and even of necessaries. He always went on foot when he was called to preach in the neighboring towns and villages. He sanctified these journeys by meditating as he walked along, and the beauty which God has so profusely lavished on this earth, drew from him many a fervent act of thanksgiving for his goodness in making the world so fair. When he overtook any one on the way, he entered into conversation with him for a little while, and then he would take his rosary from his belt, and invite his companion to recite the beads with him.

CHAPTER III.

THE new doctrines of Luther, having overrun Switzerland, spread into the northern provinces of Italy. The Cardinals of the Holy Office, after a long and careful deliberation on the best means to preserve the people from these soul-destroying heresies, appointed Father Michael Ghislieri Inquisitor and ordered him to take up his residence at Como.

Probably no beneficial institution has been so calumniated as the Roman Inquisition. Until lately, when its real character has been dispassionately studied by the enemies of the Catholic Church, it was looked upon by Protestants as a bloodthirsty means, unscrupulously made use of, to imprison and murder the enemies of the Catholic religion. Impartial inquiry and calm examination have now shown it to have been a prudent and lawful way of hindering the civil wars and intestine strife which have usually followed the intro-

duction of Protestantism into lands hitherto Catholic.

The Roman Inquisition must not be confounded with the Spanish Inquisition.

The principle on which the Roman Inquisition was based is one common to all religions. It is that heresy, or dissent from the true faith, is a great crime, and that it should be punished as such. Reason teaches that the death of one man is preferable than that thousands should die the death of the soul in consequence of the propagation of heretical doctrines. Universal experience has also taught mankind that the wars which have frequently followed the introduction of heresy into a Catholic country have been among the most terrible known in history, and that therefore it was expedient that some should die rather than many should suffer.

It is difficult to point out the exact date when the Roman Inquisition was founded. In the early centuries of the Christian Church all cases of heresy were tried in secular courts, but in process of time this duty fell into the hands of Bishops, who never punished those who were condemned, but delivered them

over to the secular power to receive their deserts.

The spread of the Waldensian and Albigensian heresies, in the 11th and 12th centuries, induced the Popes to take more stringent measures for exterminating heretical doctrines. The Fourth Council of Lateran, held in the year 1215, may be said to have permanently established the courts of the Roman Inquisition. Gregory 9th gave the care of the Inquisition to the Dominican Fathers in Germany, Arragon, Lombardy, and the south of France. In Spain it became a great power under Cardinal Mendoza, and Ferdinand and Isabella obtained a bull from the Pope authorizing the establishment of the Tribunal of the Inquisition. Thus the famous Spanish Inquisition was from its first commencement more of a royal than ecclesiastical court. The first court was opened in Seville in 1481, and executions became frequent. Many appeals were made to the Popes from the sentences of the Spanish Inquisition, and Rome frequently interfered to moderate its rigor. From the beginning of the 17th century, the Spanish Inquisition became more lenient, and since

then it has been occupied chiefly with the examination of books suspected of heresy. It was several times abolished, finally in 1834.

The Roman Inquisition was established for the whole Catholic Church in 1543. It is universally acknowledged that it was the mildest institution of the kind, and has never inflicted the punishment of death. It was to this Inquisition that Father Michael was appointed. No one, therefore, should be surprised that Saint Pius was an Inquisitor. As soon as he arrived at Como he at once began a personal inspection of all the towns placed under his jurisdiction, being hindered by no hardship or fatigue. In the exercise of his office we learn that, although usually so tender hearted, he could become stern and inflexible, when God's honor and the good of the Church called for vigorous measures.

A book written by one of the most insidious heretics, and printed in the castle of Poschiano was sent to an influential merchant, who undertook to circulate it in Modena and Vincenza. Father Michael seized all the copies, but, the Episcopal See of Como, being vacant at the time, the merchant, who had friends in

the Cathedral Chapter, obtained permission from the Vicar General to have them returned. Father Michael excommunicated all who had taken part in the matter, and went to Rome to place his conduct before the Cardinals of the Holy Office. They approved of what he had done, and cited the Vicar General and Cathedral Chapter to appear before them in Rome.

When Father Michael returned to Como the canons excited the mob against him, and he was stoned in the streets. He took refuge in the castle of Bernard Odeschalci, but some powerful nobleman continued to persecute him, and the Count della Trinita threatened to throw him into a well. "What God wishes will be done," was his calm reply.

The Vicar General complained of him to the Governor of Milan, Ferdinand de Gonzaga, representing him as a dangerous man who was attempting to excite sedition by exaggerated zeal, and demanded that he should be hindered from doing any harm. Father Michael deemed it prudent to leave the city, upon which the Governor cited him to appear and answer the charges brought against

him. Although Saint Pius was thirty miles from Milan when he received the citation, he set out on foot to return. But being warned that the heretics had laid an ambush for him at the same place where the glorious Dominican Martyr, Saint Peter of Verona, died for the faith, he took another road, and travelling on foot all night, appeared next day at the hour fixed. The Governor received him angrily, and left the audience chamber without saying a word to him. The humble Father patiently received the studied affront, and thanked God for humbling him so publicly. Seeing a gentleman on intimate terms with the Governor, he spoke to him, and begged him to make known to the Governor that he was present. This gentleman quickly returned, and brought back word that he was to be imprisoned; a threat, however, not carried into execution.

CHAPTER IV.

FATHER Michael soon afterwards returned to Rome. He arrived at the monastery of Santa Sabina on Christmas eve, fasting, and fatigued with his long journey. The Prior, who did not know him, thinking from his dusty and way-worn appearance that he had come to Rome for purposes of his own, said to him, in a tone of raillery: "Have you come to Rome to see if the Sacred College of Cardinals is disposed to make you Pope?" "I have come to Rome," said the humble Father, "because the interests of the Church call me here. I shall go away as soon as my task is fulfilled. Till then all I ask is a short hospitality and some fodder for my mule."

He presented himself the next day before the Cardinals of the Sacred Office. Cardinal John Peter Caraffa, the founder of the Theatines, afterwards Pope Paul 4th, was among them. He had devoted his whole life to the restoration of Catholic discipline and morals. In the person of the humble Dominican friar

he at once recognized what a great man stood before him. Having obtained from him a faithful narration of all which had taken place in Lombardy, the Cardinals approved of his conduct, and sent him back to Como, to continue his labors. The nomination of a new Bishop of Como, and the submission of the Vicar General and refractory canons, at length restored peace. But new difficulties arose at Coire, a small town in Switzerland. Two canons disputed the possession of a benefice. Both were of rich and powerful families. One, named Laplante, was accused of heretical doctrine, and loose morality, but was warmly supported in his claim by influential friends. Father Michael, having heard of this scandalous dispute, determined to put an end to it, and set off for the town. The Catholics warned him that the country through which he would pass was overrun with heresy, and advised him to take off his Dominican habit so that he might not be recognized. "No," he answered; "when I accepted this office I accepted danger and death at the same time. I could not lose my life in a more glorious cause than by giving it for the faith." Brave

words! revealing the spirit of the martyr; words justified by all the actions of his life. So he set out for Coire publicly in mid-day, and arrived there safely. He condemned Laplante, and quickly put an end to the scandal.

He next went to Bergamo, where a well-known lawyer, George Medulaco, was steadily propagating Protestant doctrines. He had already been reprimanded. Father Michael Ghislieri, therefore, reproved him, but treated him with kindness and allowed a near kinsman of his, Jerome Albano, to visit him in prison, with the hope of leading him back to the Catholic faith. Yet the heretic met all his arguments with abuse and refused to listen.

Medulaco was connected by birth with the leading families of Bergamo, who rose up in arms, and liberated him from prison. Father Michael, is no wise daunted, publicly excommunicated them in the principal square of the city, and had the satisfaction of finding that the citizens had still some respect for the laws of the Church, for they took the rescued heretic back to prison, and implored pardon

for their crime. Medulaco was sent to Venice, and ended his days in deserved obscurity.

The Bishop of Bergamo, Victor Soranzo, of a noble Venitian family, was also infected with heresy, and incited the senate to seek a quarrel with the intrepid Inquisitor. The Bishop was arrested, taken to Rome, deposed from his See, and imprisoned in the castle of San Angelo.

The important and very trustworthy office of Commissary General of the Inquisition having become vacant, in the year 1551, by the death of the Dominican Father Theophilus de Tropeus, Father Michael was recommended for the vacant office by Cardinal Caraffa, and at once installed. A very intimate friendship sprung up between these holy men. Cardinal Caraffa gave him apartments in his own palace, and ordered his attendants to admit him to his presence, no matter at what hour he presented himself. In this new office he worked with indefatigable zeal. Every morning he visited the heretics in prison, and by persuasion and Christian charity endeavored to show them the grievousness of their errors. His zeal was crowned with

success. When any of these misguided men retracted his errors, no kindness was too great for him to show him. He devoted the greater part of the revenues he received from this office to the relief of the poor.

One of the souls he thus rescued from eternal damnation was the famous Sixtus of Siena.

He was born at Siena, in the year 1520, of Jewish parents. He entered the Catholic Church, and according to some authors, became a Franciscan. His knowledge of Greek and Hebrew made him famous, and he taught as well as preached, with great success, in the principal cities of Italy, for ten years. Unhappily he fell into error, for which he was confined in the prisons of the Sacred Office.

But Father Michael could not allow a man so talented and endowed with such a power for good to perish. He earnestly begged God to enlighten him, and to show him the best way to proceed. Fortified with prayer, he sought an interview, and soon led him back to the ways of truth. Sixtus repented, and in the sincerity of his repentance begged to be allowed to do penance for his sins. Father

Michael went at once to the Pope, and did not leave his presence until he had obtained his pardon. Several months afterwards, to his great delight, Sixtus entered the Order of St. Dominic, in which he did severe penance for his sins, and led a very edifying life. His name is well known to Biblical students.

About the same time Father Michael became the friend of another great and famous man: a Franciscan Friar, who became known to the world as Pope Sixtus the Fifth. The way in which these two souls met is very characteristic of the times, and shows us, as nothing but such an incident can, the spirit of inquiry and doubt prevalent at that period. The Catholic faith was attacked everywhere; even under the shadow of the dome of Saint Peter's, in the very heart of Christianity.

A young Franciscan, Father Felix Peretti, was preaching a course of sermons in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Rome, in the year 1551. His eloquence drew crowds, and he became so well known that those in perplexity often gave him letters on his way to the pulpit, containing an account of their religious doubts, or the spiritual wants of

their soul. He was accustomed to read these letters when he paused for a short time at the end of the different divisions of his sermon. One day he received one on the subject of predestination, ending with these words: "Thou liest," written in large letters.

This unexpected attack disconcerted him, and he was obliged to shorten his sermon, not to let his embarrassment be noticed. On his return to the monastery he retired into his cell, but hardly had he entered when he saw a Dominican father follow him. This father entered into conversation with him, and interrogated him on his theological opinions, pressing him with subtle arguments, and sounding the depths of his soul, with all the skill and subtlety of a practised theologian. His answers showed him to be firmly attached to all the doctrines of the Catholic faith. Father Michael, for it was he, at length embraced him with joy, saying: "If you are ever in need of a defender, none but myself shall undertake that duty."

CHAPTER V.

POPE Julius the Third died March 23d, 1555. Before entering into solemn conclave, to elect his successor, the Cardinals invested Father Michael Ghislieri with the full exercise of all their powers; an act unprecedented in the history of the Catholic Church, and one which reveals the influence he had already obtained in the Pontifical Court by his sterling merits and force of natural character.

Marcellus the Second was elected on the fourth day of the Conclave, but died twenty-two days afterwards. He was succeeded by Cardinal Caraffa, who had ever shown himself the staunch friend of Father Michael. He was eighty years of age, and took the name of Paul the Fourth.

Not content with retaining Father Michael as Commissary General of the Inquisition, he nominated him Bishop of Nepi and Sutri, two cities near Rome. Father Michael was over-

come with grief when he heard of the dignity conferred upon him, and went to beseech the Pope to annul the nomination. He begged him to take away the heavy responsibility thus imposed upon him, and to allow him to live and die a simple Friar. The Pope would not listen, and told him to look upon it as the will of God. Upon which Father Michael only asked permission to be allowed to go to his diocese at once; but it was not until January of 1557 that he was released from his Office as Commissary General of the Inquisition, and allowed to take possession of his diocese in person.

His presence soon became felt. He visited every parish, large and small. A Bishop's presence had never been known in many parishes he visited, and his visitation was a cause of much practical good.

Still he turned with sincere regret to the quiet of his dearly loved monastery, and implored the Pope to allow him to resign his see, to return to the society of his fellow Dominicans. Paul the 4th, desirous of destroying all such hopes, answered: "I will attach a chain to your feet so strong, that even after

my death you will not be able to dream of the cloister," and a short time afterwards he sent for him, to tell him that he was about to make him Cardinal in the next consistory. Some difficulties, however, arose, and he was not raised to that princely dignity until March 15th, 1557. As he felt no joy whatever on being elevated to the Cardinalate, he could not express any gratitude to the Pope, but this was done for him by all the other Cardinals, who, by a spontaneous movement, thanked the Pope for giving them a colleague so worthy.

He chose the title of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, which was admitted into the number of titular churches for the first time in his favor. This beautiful Gothic Church was originally under the care of the Greek monks of the Order of Saint Basil, but was given to the Order of Saint Dominic by Gregory the Eleventh, for the sepulture of Saint Catherine of Sienna.

Instead of being known as Cardinal Ghislieri, he was called Cardinal Alexandrine. This was his own wish, to remind him always that he was a Dominican, for it will be re-

membered that the name of Brother Michael of Alexandria was given him on taking the vows in the Dominican Order.

Soon afterwards he was appointed Inquisitor General, in which office he had to decide causes and appeals from all parts of the world, and was invested with authority over all Inquisitors, Delegates, and even Bishops who exercised this authority, and his decision was to be final. This was a power given to none before, and to none since, the Popes always reserving appeals to themselves.

These striking marks of esteem caused him to feel no pride and he was so little elated, that when the Pope spoke to him about creating him Cardinal, he said: "What, holy Father, would you take me out of purgatory to throw me into hell." His sincere and heartfelt modesty made him look upon that dignity as far above his merits, and he was fearful lest he should not be able to fulfil its obligations. He did not abandon the Dominican habit for the Cardinal's robes, and continued to observe faithfully all the fasts and abstinence prescribed by the Dominican rule, in no wise diminished any of the aus-

tertities it commands, and lived a life as simple and unostentatious as the humblest monk in the cloister. His household was formed of just so many servants as were necessary. He insisted that they should be of blameless lives; and when he received any one into his service, always warned him that it was not a palace but a monastery he entered, and that he would have to live as austere a life as any monk in the cloister. He watched over his servants, and especially took care that they should often receive the sacraments, appointing certain days when he himself administered holy Communion to them. He even busied himself about the quality of their food, took care that they were allowed ample time for rest, and ordered that no one should be overworked. He was careful to give them no extra trouble, and never called upon them during the time allowed for meals or repose. The most beautiful apartment in his palace became an infirmary for them, and when any were sick he visited them in person.

Paul the Fourth died, August 18, 1559, and was succeeded by Pius the Fourth, who also gave him every mark of esteem and confi-

dence. He confirmed him in the office of Grand Inquisitor, and transferred him from the see of Nepi and Sutri to the more important one of Mondovi in Piedmont.

He determined to go to his new diocese, which was in a deplorable state; but by the advice of his physician paid a visit to the baths of Lucca on his way. The Senate of the City of Genoa dispatched four galleys to meet him. Emmanuel Philibert, Duke of Savoy, received him with unusual honors, and entertained him for three days. Arrived at Mondovi, he gave his whole care to the reformation of the diocese. He preached in every church, administered the sacrament of Confirmation, and spared no efforts to root out the abuses which had arisen partly from the negligence of the preceding Bishops, and partly from the license of heretics in the diocese of the neighborhood.

CHAPTER VI.

AS soon as Saint Pius returned to Rome, the Pope placed him on a congregation, established to terminate the difficulties which had arisen in consequence of the reforms in ecclesiastical discipline made by the Council of Trent. In this Office he always showed himself the strenuous upholder of all its salutary decrees. Thus, when the Grand Duke of Tuscany and Modena had asked the Cardinal's hat for two young princes of his house, Ferdinand de Medici, thirty years, and Frederick de Gonzaga, only twenty-one years of age, and the Pope not liking to refuse this favor, Cardinal Ghislieri boldly opposed it in these terms: "Your holiness will allow me to represent to you that the Council of Trent, having carefully toiled to reform morals and to restore ecclesiastical discipline, unhappily relaxed by the evils of the times, all the Bishops would be scandalized to see one of its decrees thus broken. The Church does not

need children, but full-grown men; men capable of upholding her fair fame and holiness." And he resisted the proposal so warmly that the Pope deferred their election. But high-born relations insisted, and the Pope gave way. When, according to custom, the new Cardinals sent representatives to thank each member of the Sacred College, Cardinal Alexandrine could not conceal his sorrow, and said: "You have no cause for gratitude to me, for I opposed with all my might this promotion." And when it was represented to him that this great freedom of thought and speech might draw him into disgrace, he answered that so soon as he was not allowed to speak the truth in Rome he would gladly retire to his diocese.

Soon afterwards he was forced by his conscience to disagree with the Pope. Charles the Ninth of France proposed to Pius the 4th that the legation of Avignon should be taken away from Cardinal Farnese, and given to Charles de Bourbon. The Pope was inclined to assent, but Cardinal Alexandrine, knowing that Cardinal de Bourbon was allied by blood to the Huguenot faction, thought it would not

be for the good of the Church, and therefore vigorously opposed the measure. The Pope acknowledged the truth and force of his objections, but became angry, and finding him inflexible in his opposition, showed his displeasure by restricting his privileges as Inquisitor. He was in no way moved by these marks of evident disgrace, and finding that his diocese required him, at once sent off his effects by sea and was himself preparing to embark, when he learned that Corsairs had captured the ship.

He was attacked by the gravel soon after, and hoped that his death would give him a speedy entrance into heaven. He recovered, however, and the Cardinals, hearing that he was starting for Mondovi, did all they could to keep him in Rome. The Pope also, knowing how great would be his loss, forbade him to leave the eternal city.

CHAPTER VII.

POPE Pius the 4th died December 9th, 1565. When the conclave of Cardinals met, it was expected that Saint Charles Borromeo would be elected Pope. Although only 27 years of age, he had shown great abilities in the management of his diocese, and his uprightness as Cardinal had surrounded him with glory, so that he was universally esteemed as a saint, but during the conclave the unanimous vote centred in St. Pius.

When the Cardinals went to announce his election to him, he was profoundly astonished, and his humility deeply wounded. He declined the honor; but after many tearful protestations, was at length induced to consent. Being vested in the pontifical robes, he was placed on the throne and the ceremony of adoration, or homage of the Cardinals, took place; after which his election was publicly announced.

He became Pope, January 9th, 1566. He was sixty-two years of age.

When the Roman people heard of his election they were in great fear. The inflexibility of his conduct when duty required firmness was well known, but the finer and more attractive qualities of sweetness and gentleness were not so universally recognized, and the Romans were afraid the new Pope would rule them with a rod of iron. The expression of their fear came to his ears. "Let us act in such a way," he said, "that they will be more afflicted at my death, than at my election;" and so it came to pass.

Accordingly he began his reign by an act of kindness. He caused a list of all the poor in the city to be given to him, so that he could give each a weekly alms; and instead of scattering money among the crowd at his election, or of having the festivals usual at the coronation of a Pope, he gave the money either to the hospitals of the city, or to those poor who were ashamed to own their poverty. He appointed officials to take care of orphans and young girls till of age to marry, when he dowered them liberally. It was the custom to distribute a thousand crowns to fête the Ambassadors who assisted at the cor-

onation. This money he sent to the poorest and most needy monasteries in Rome, and when several persons found fault with him for doing so, he said: "God will not punish me for depriving the ambassadors of princes of a feast, but he will demand from me an account of the needy, who are his own members." On the day of his coronation he recognized among the crowd a poor laborer of Bergamo, who had formerly received him charitably when he had lost his way, and had concealed him in his house when he was in danger from heretics. He ordered five hundred ducats to be given to him as a reward for his charity.

The times in which Saint Pius was called to guide the bark of Peter were very evil, and the Catholic world was menaced with many dangers. Protestantism and unbridled moral license had ruined some of the finest Catholic countries, and although heresy had received a great check by the wise and prudent labors of the Council of Trent, yet none could view the ravages it had made without profound sorrow. Nevertheless, many were the streams of light amid the darkness of the almost universal corruption.

Saints, not a few were living at that time. The same Order which had given the new Pope to the Church also gave her Saint Catherine of Ricci and Saint Rose of Lima. The founder of the Oratorians, Saint Philip Neri, was leading many souls to God. The Jesuits had Saint Francis Borgia and Saint Stanislaus Kostka, while Saint Felix de Cantalice, Saint John of God, Saint Teresa, Saint Charles Borromeo, and Saint Peter of Alcantara gave a lustre to the Church by their virtues and proved its divinity and the truth of its doctrines by their miracles.

Saint Pius soon showed himself to be a reformer in the true sense of the word. As soon as he was elected, he began to devote his whole energies to the service of the Church, especially to carrying out the decrees of the Council of Trent. He commenced by reforming the pontifical household, and the capital of the Christian world. He fasted and prayed much, to beg the blessing of God on his efforts, and frequently recommended himself to the prayers of religious communities. He published a Jubilee to draw down upon the Church the blessing of God.

He called a meeting of all the dignitaries and domestics of his palace, and gave them a rule of life; he told them plainly that he would never allow anything against morality to take place under his own eyes. He ordered that an hour should be set apart, three times a week, for public spiritual reading in his palace, and provided books of devotion for each one to read privately.

Prayers were said in common every day, and he never failed to be present at them. As soon as he retired to rest in the evening, the palace gates were closed. He was not content with recommending a holy life to others, he set the example himself. He never laid aside the white habit of coarse cloth which he wore when only a simple friar, and in his dignity as supreme head of the Church, when he could have justified himself for indulging in outward state, did not do so, but remained as simple in his tastes and habits as he had always been. Although Pope he was truly a religious. He rose every night, and going into Saint Peter's, visited all the altars; and when any difficulty arose in the government of the Church, he spent a whole night

in prayer begging God to enlighten and guide him.

Not only did he rigorously observe the fasts of the Church, but such was his mortification and love of penance, that, according to a contemporary author, the expense of his table did not amount to more than seventeen cents a day.

His medical advisers having insisted upon his taking wine, he mixed a few drops with water, and imposed upon himself the penance not to drink more than three times at the same meal. And lest the sufferings of his divine Lord Jesus Christ should ever be absent from his mind, he caused a crucifix to be placed on the table, with the inscription written at the foot: "Be it far from me to glory except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," so that whilst he refreshed his body with necessary food his soul might not be drawn away from the contemplation of heavenly things.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOON after his election, St. Pius gathered the Cardinals together to consider the best means of averting the anger of God, which seemed to have fallen on the world, to consider the surest means for staying the progress of heresy, and to take steps for breaking the aggressive power of the Turks. He boldly reminded them that as they were called by God to rule the Church, they must ever be the first to set a good example. "It is to you," he said, "that Jesus Christ spoke those words: 'You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth.'"

He began the work of reformation in faith and morals by reforming Rome, the centre of Christianity. The city was overrun with courtezans. Saint Pius published an edict against them, in which he banished them from the pontifical states; and when several Roman magistrates represented to him that it would be next to impossible to carry out

the decree, Pius could hardly control his indignation, and said: "You ought to blush to make yourselves the advocates of these pests, but if you prefer to live amongst abandoned women, I will myself leave Rome and establish my see elsewhere." His firmness frightened the richest and most notorious among them, and they obeyed his commands, taking refuge in the large cities of Italy. All who remained were forced to live in a very solitary part of the city, and many abandoned their evil life. When Pius heard of this, he assisted them generously from his own purse, to prevent their falling into poverty, and thus be tempted to return to their infamous life. He also expelled the Jews from the states of the Church. They made a trade of telling fortunes by the stars, and were engaged in usury. He allowed them, however, to remain in Rome and Ancona, where they were thought to be necessary to carry on the trade with the Levant. But both in Ancona and Rome, he insisted on their living in a particular quarter of the city, and forbade them to leave it unless they wore an orange-colored hat, so that every one might at once know them to be Jews.

When he was Cardinal he had made great efforts to convince some of the most learned and renowned Jews of their errors. One of them, a Rabbi, Elias Carcossi, wishing to get rid of him, said: "I will become a Christian when you become Pope." He forgot this, but Saint Pius did not. One day the Jew was summoned to the Pope's presence, and gently reminded of his promise. Elias could not deny it, and returned to his home sad and disconsolate. Pius spent the whole night in prayer for his conversion, recommending him especially to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, the destroyer of heresies, and next morning the Jew, with his three children, went to the Pope, imploring the grace of Christian baptism. Pius baptized them himself, and gave Elias his own name of Michael. The wonderful and sudden conversion of this influential Rabbi led to many others, and they became so numerous that the Pope found it necessary to establish a home for Jewish catechumens, where they could receive full instructions before being received into the Church. He abolished a number of abuses which had been allowed in Rome by his predecessors.

The horse racing during the Carnival took place in front of Saint Peter's. Saint Pius looked upon it as a profanation, that the soil which had been bedewed with the blood of martyrs should be the scene of such irreligious amusements. He did not wish to forbid the races, which attracted thousands of strangers into the city, and were a great benefit to the tradesmen, but he changed the place where they were held.

He found many pagan statues in the art galleries of the Vatican palace, and sent them to the Capitol to be arranged in a museum. The city magistrates were so grateful for this donation that they ordered that in future the magistrates should attend at a solemn Mass in the Dominican Church of the Minerva on the 17th of January, the joint anniversary of Saint Pius' birth and coronation, and that they should offer each year on that day a silver gilt chalice to the Pope; a ceremony observed until recent times. Towards the end of his life the Roman senate, wishing to perpetuate the memory of his government, resolved to erect a bronze statue of him in the Capitol, but no sooner did he hear of their intention

than he strictly forbade it, and said that if any good had been done during his pontificate, he would rather the memory of it should be engraved in the hearts of his beloved people than on a statue.

Saint Pius did much for education. Under his care schools for the children of the poor were multiplied, and amply endowed. He gave a large donation to the Jesuits of Avignon, in France, for educational purposes; and founded and endowed a magnificent college at Pavia which still bears his name. He always encouraged literature. The celebrated Surius, having written the lives of the Saints, he wrote to commend him for his pious labors. The Centuriators of Magdeburg, having concentrated in one work all the malignant calumnies against God's holy Church, Saint Pius wished that a refutation should appear in Germany, the same country in which the attack on the Church had been made.

He also did much to encourage the mechanical arts, and for this purpose gave 10,000 crowns to found a manufactory of woollen stuffs. This establishment employed so many hands, sustained so great a number of fami-

lies, and did so much good in Rome, that the senate caused a laudatory inscription to be put up on the gate of the manufactory, near the Tiberini fountain.

He often visited the hospitals, to teach by his own example what care should be given to the sick. He spoke to all the invalids, consoled them, exhorted them to bear their sickness patiently, and to turn their sufferings into merits, by uniting them to the sufferings of Our Divine Lord. During one of these visits he gave 20,000 crowns to the hospital of the Holy Ghost, and when he had made a thorough visitation of the hospital under the care of the Brothers Hospitallers of Saint John of God, he confirmed their congregation.

He appointed eminent prelates to visit those prisons in which debtors were confined, and gave them power to liberate all who had fallen into sickness in prison, paying their debts himself; and also authorizing them to set at liberty those who never could hope to pay their debts, and those who were willing to pay as much as they were able.

Having learned that many galley-slaves

were still in chains, although their term of punishment had expired, he deputed Prince Andrew Doria to visit all the ships in the pontifical states, and to free those who had been so unjustly detained. He published a Bull excommunicating those who pillaged shipwrecks. He declared slaves who had embraced Christianity Roman citizens, to show his esteem for the holy sacrament of Baptism.

He spent much in works of utility. Good water was brought from Salona to Rome for the public fountains. The two Basilicas of Saint Peter and Saint John Lateran were richly decorated at his expense, and he added many treasures to the Vatican museums.

CHAPTER IX.

SAINT Pius delivered the pontifical states from brigands. The chief brigand, Mariano d'Ascoli, escaped the vigilance of the Pope's officers. One day a peasant went to the Pope to deliver Mariano into his power. "How will you do it?" said Pius to him. "He trusts me," answered the man; "I can easily entice him into my house." "Never," indignantly replied the Pope, "never will I authorize you to do so shameful a deed. God will find me some way of chastising this brigand without thus abusing friendship." Mariano, having heard of this noble answer, voluntarily retired from the Pope's states, and never re-entered them.

Saint Pius next turned his attention to the instruction of ignorant Christians. He looked upon ignorance of Christian doctrine, and of the teachings of morality, as the principal cause of the disorders which affected the Church; rightly judging that a more intimate

knowledge of the teachings of religion would lead to a more perfect practise of Christian virtues. He, therefore, instituted the confraternity of Christian Doctrine, whose members bound themselves to explain the catechism every Sunday and holy-day in certain Churches. And when he saw the eagerness for instruction, and the great good this did, he granted indulgences to the teachers and to those who attended the instructions, and by a bull addressed to the Bishops of the Catholic world he warmly exhorted them to establish this confraternity in their dioceses.

The immense amount of work the Pope had burdened himself with now began to tell on his constitution, and he was advised by his physicians and confessor to choose a confidential friend who could relieve him of some of the temporal duties of his office. It had often been the custom for the Popes to give the Cardinal's hat to some relative who was invested with the temporal charge of the Pontifical States. This custom, although harmless in itself, had been abused, and Saint Pius had made a resolution not to raise any of his relations to ecclesiastical honors;—but when the

Cardinals themselves chose Michael Bonelli, his sister's grandson, for this office, he could not refuse, especially as Bonelli had shown his fitness for the office. He was a Dominican, and had become known by the name of Cardinal Alexandrine, the same name which Saint Pius had borne before his elevation to the Pontifical throne.

Although Saint Pius had given way, against his own wishes, to the desires of the Cardinals, he soon let it be known that no abuse would be allowed in consequence of this appointment; for the first thing which he ordered his nephew to do was to publish a solemn decree, intended to render nepotism impossible for the future. The pontifical Bull obliged all the Cardinals, by oath, to oppose any future Pope who should wish to give away any of the property of the Church to his relations, and to take an oath that they would never seek to be freed from this oath, nor to accept any dispensation from its binding force, should any future Pope wish to release them from it.

He gave each of his nephews a small donation, suitable to their lowly state in life, but refused to do more for them.

One of his nieces, having married a man of talent, the command of the Castle of San Angelo was confided to him. A nephew was married to the daughter of the Pope's secretary. Saint Pius told the young woman that none of his relations were to hope to become rich simply because they were of the same family as the Pope. He sent her a mule, saddle, and two panniers, recommending her not to travel to Rome in any other way. Another nephew, fighting against the Turks, was made a prisoner. Pius ransomed him, gave him a horse and fire arms, and made him Captain of a troop ;—but the young man misbehaved himself and Saint Pius at once ordered him to leave Rome.

A nobleman from Bosco went in person to express the congratulations of the inhabitants of his native town on his elevation to the papal throne, and presented him with the Lordship of that town. "But what am I to do with the town?" asked Pius. "Your holiness," answered the Marquis, has a family to whom it would be welcome." "True," said the Pope, "true I have many nephews and nieces, but during my lifetime they will

never have any higher title than what they received from their fathers. And you must know, also, that if, after receiving this mark of generosity from Bosco, I should feel obliged to return it with some greater favor, I am not able to do so, having recently tied my hands, as well as those of my successors, by a stringent ordination."

But having refused this homage he accepted one of a different kind, one much more agreeable to him. When he was quite young he assisted a friend one day to set a vine. After they had planted it, St. Pius said: "We have lost our time, no one will ever drink wine made from this vine." He was mistaken, however, for it grew and flourished. When Pius became Pope, the friend of his youth filled a little barrel with wine made from it, and carrying it on his head, appeared one day in his village costume before the Pope. Pius joyfully welcomed him. The man presented the little barrel and said: "Your holiness must allow you were not infallible when you said that no wine would ever be made from the vine you and I planted; behold here is some of it."

His benevolence was not sufficient, however, to screen him from insult. A few days after his election the pious Romans were scandalized to read on the walls of the city the name of Pius the Fifth accompanied by these words: "He was made man," written in irony underneath. The author of this insult turned out to be an ecclesiastic, who had been refused a canonry he had begged from the Pope. When it was known who was the author Pius sent for him, and required an avowal of his fault, and said: "My friend, when you see me in fault I beg of you to let me know of it, so that I may correct it." After which he dismissed him.

CHAPTER X.

SAINT Pius deserves a high place among the prelates of God's holy Church who have merited the name of ecclesiastical reformers.

He began by enforcing the observance of the decrees of the Council of Trent in all parts of the Catholic world. They had been accepted immediately by a few countries only: in Portugal, the republic of Venice, and the Swiss Cantons; Philip the Second published them with certain restrictions in Spain, Flanders and in his Italian states. In France the Queen Regent, Catherine de Medicis, was afraid to offend the Calvinists, who looked upon the decrees as especially directed against themselves, but her son, Charles 9th, promised to publish them, not all at one time, but by degrees. The German Court was not at first more favorably inclined to the decrees that France.--Poland resisted a long time before consenting to their publication.

The name of Pius the Fifth must always be

associated with the Catechism of the Council of Trent. It was already finished when he became Pope, and only awaited the final approbation of the Vicar of Christ. He approved it at once, and ordered that it should be translated into French, German, and Polish. He wrote to many Catholic Bishops to recommend it, and to remind them that they themselves must give a good example by living in conformity with its teachings; and when it seemed as if his letters had produced little effect, he ordered his nuncios to second in every way the intentions of the Council.

Episcopal residence was one of the decrees of the Council, and he did his utmost to see that it was obeyed, reminding Bishops and priests of the care our Divine Redeemer took of his flock, shedding his precious blood for the salvation of sinners.

Another very wise ordination of the Council was the establishment of ecclesiastical seminaries in every diocese. Until then the universities had been the only centres of education open to students, who attended in them lectures of theology, law and medicine. Between the classes the students were masters of their

own time, and in this way became exposed to all the dangers which beset youth uncontrolled by the wholesome influence of home and its sacred ties; and thus it was that many holy vocations were lost. Several pious ecclesiastics, from time to time, had endeavored to remedy this evil, by founding houses in which ecclesiastical students could live, but such homes were to be found only in one or two cities. The fathers of the Council of Trent wished to extend this custom to the whole world, and had ordered that ecclesiastical seminaries should be established in every diocese. Some Bishops had been very slow in carrying out this decree, but St. Pius wrote to them in energetic terms to remind them of their duty.

He made many reforms in the administration of Church benefices, and put an end to the pernicious practice of making them hereditary in families. And when it was represented to him that the laws he thus made would ruin the Roman Court, he answered, "It were better that the Roman Court should be ruined than the Catholic Church."

He also did much for the reform of relig-

ious orders. He ordered that the Regular clerks, instituted by Saint Jerome Emilian, should in future take the three vows of holy religion. He re-organized the Order of Citeaux in Sicily, where it was almost ruined; he restored unity to the Servites, who had separated into two bodies, and revived strict discipline among the Minims in France.

CHAPTER XI.

IN England Catholics were groaning under the tyranny of Elizabeth, the illegitimate daughter of Henry the Eighth. Little could the Pope do to aid them, but what little he could he did. It was the aim of St. Pius to unite the Catholic princes of Europe in a league against the countries which had embraced the new religious opinions.

The beautiful Mary Queen of Scots, and the family of her first husband, Francis of Lorraine, belonged to the Catholic party, Elizabeth of England to the Protestant faction. The Queen of England ascended the throne first. As soon as she felt secure she threw off the mask, openly professed Protestantism, and very quickly uprooted and destroyed everything Catholic in her kingdom. Mary Stewart succeeded to the Scottish throne at the death of her father, James the First, when only an infant. She was taken to France, by her mother Mary of Lorraine, when 16 years

of age, and married to the Dauphin, who died soon afterwards. On her return to Scotland she met with a sorry welcome from her subjects, who hated her because she was a devout Catholic. Of exquisite beauty and rare talents, she found herself the rival of Elizabeth, who, to the ability of a man, united the lack of virtue only too common in the lawless age which succeeded the birth of Protestantism. Elizabeth hated her because she knew the throne she disgraced was Mary's birthright, and also on account of her beauty. Cool and crafty, Elizabeth, one of the most odious women in history, watched every movement of her rival, and lay in wait to take advantage of any mistake the warm-hearted young Queen of Scots might make in her career.

Every student of history knows the story of Mary's misfortunes; how the beautiful young Queen was made the tool of ambition, her affections outraged, her virtues denied, her chastity assailed, until at last, overcome by misfortune, she threw herself on the mercy of her merciless rival, and sought protection from her cousin.

When St. Pius became Pope Queen Mary had already travelled far on the road of misfortune. From her prison she wrote several times to him, and he answered her letters in consoling terms, bidding her be resigned under her misfortunes, and promising he would do all in his power to aid her; and when he found that all other means failed, he excommunicated Queen Elizabeth. He kept back the excommunication for some time, hoping the Queen of England would relent; but when he found that Queen Mary was dragged from one prison to another, he issued a Bull, in which Elizabeth was cut off from the body of the faithful of Christ, and her subjects freed from their allegiance. All his efforts were in vain; the Queen of Scots was beheaded in Fotheringay Castle, and with her last breath protested that she was unjustly condemned, and that she died, as she had lived, a Catholic.

CHAPTER XII.

SAINT Pius devoted much of his attention to America, then but recently discovered, and above all set his face against slavery in the new world. The greatest pagan legislators never rose so high as to conceive society without slavery; but Christianity, by boldly proclaiming the equality of man, dealt a fatal blow to this iniquitous system. Our Divine Redeemer, taking upon himself our human nature, raised man to a higher state than that which man had enjoyed before, and the religion which he founded, by declaring every man equal in God's sight, put an end to the degrading theories of antiquity. The Catholic Church never ceased her efforts to destroy slavery until the last chain which bound man captive to the will of him who had made himself his master had been broken, and the dignity of man triumphantly vindicated.

The natives of America listened eagerly to the voice of the missionaries who preached

the Christian faith to them, but when they saw the evil lives of many Christians they concluded that a religion which produced such evil results, could never have come from heaven, and the efforts of the pious missionaries, Benedictines, Jesuits, Franciscans, and Dominicans were thwarted by the cruelty and wickedness of European Christians. The great Dominican missionary de las Casas, died worn out with unceasing efforts on behalf of the Indians, but not until he had seen the see of Peter occupied by a fellow religious, who he knew would befriend his beloved converts in the land of the west.

From America Saint Pius soon received innumerable complaints sent by the missionaries of every religious Order, that the evil lives of the European settlers were destroying all the good they had done. He wrote to the kings of Spain and Portugal to encourage them to propagate the Catholic faith in their new western dominions. He also wrote to Cardinal Spinosa, Minister of Philip the Second, of Spain.

Some evil-minded men attempted his life. They poisoned a crucifix which he used in

his private devotions. One day, after having knelt some time in prayer before this crucifix, little suspecting the danger, he was about to raise himself to its feet, when by a miracle the feet of the image of Christ on the cross drew back. He called his attendants, who took it and wiped it with a piece of bread, which they gave to some dogs to eat. The dogs died immediately. The holy Pope would not allow any attempt to be made to find out the dastardly men who thus cruelly tried to take away his life.

We have already spoken of the friendship between Saint Pius and Saint Charles Borromeo. Saint Pius gave him very great spiritual powers, to enable him to work a complete reformation in morals and discipline in his diocese of Milan. As soon as St. Charles began the needy reform, murmurs arose on all sides. The civil authorities opposed him, and seizing one of the Archbishop's officers, maltreated him and banished him from the city. He complained to the King of Spain, Milan being a part of the Spanish dominions at that time, and also laid a complaint before the Pope.

Saint Charles notified the canons of La Scala that he was about to make an archepiscopal visitation. They closed their church and house, and went so far as to shoot at the cross which was carried before the Archbishop, when he arrived to make the visitation. "The disciple is not above his Master," said St. Charles; "if they persecute me they will also persecute you." But his meekness did not prevent him from doing his duty; he interdicted the church and excommunicated all the members of the Chapter. After many delays the Governor of Milan was ordered by the King of Spain to withdraw all opposition against the reforms, the canons were compelled to make satisfaction, and the banished officer was recalled.

Saint Charles was accustomed to spend some time every evening, after the Angelus, in prayer with his servants in his private chapel. Many pious persons were also admitted. One evening, as he knelt before the altar praying as usual, he was shot at, and the assassin was proved to be a monk named Jerome Farina, of the Order of the Humiliati. This Order, founded in the twelfth century,

preserved its fervor for hundreds of years, but excessive riches had gradually ruined its monastic spirit. Cardinal Borromeo had been charged by St. Pius with the task of reforming it. At that time the whole Order did not number more than 164 members, but they possessed 94 convents. Saint Charles had convoked the Chapter General of the Order at Cremona, where their ancient rule was re-established. Some of its members, however, rebelled against this decision, and Father Jerome Farina determined to get rid of the reform and their reformer at the same time, by shooting him.

Although Saint Charles had received a deadly wound, he remained calm and continued the prayers as usual; but when he rose from his knees he found that the ball had not pierced his rochet, nor even blackened it; it left a slight mark, and then fell at his feet. The wretched monk escaped, and St. Charles ordered that no one should pursue him.

When St. Pius heard of it he shed tears, and assembled a Consistory to invite all the Cardinals to join in thanks to God for the happy escape. He ordered the Bishop of

Lodi to investigate the matter. Two provosts of the Order were arrested, but they disavowed all knowledge of the matter, named the assassin, and said that he had escaped to Savoy. He was arrested, taken to Milan, degraded from his priestly office, and executed, after having confessed his crime with tears of repentance. By a Bull dated Feb. 8th, 1570, Saint Pius forever suppressed the whole Order. Pensions were granted to all those members who had accepted the reform, and the rest of the revenues were distributed to the poor confraternities and charitable institutions, or devoted to founding an ecclesiastical seminary.

CHAPTER XIII.

WE now come to an incident in the life of St. Pius the Fifth which shows us his character in a new light. We have seen how stern he could be when called upon to defend "the truth once delivered to the saints" against the insidious attacks of heresy; now we see how firm he was in defending those who were accused falsely and unjustly.

That bugbear of Protestants, the Inquisition, in its beginning had been a purely ecclesiastical court, but in Spain, under Philip II., it became an odious state power. When Pius the Fifth became Pope, the Dominican Archbishop of Toledo, Bartholomew of Carranza, was languishing in its prisons. He had been employed by Emperor Charles V. in difficult missions in England and Flanders, had been one of the prelates at the Council of Trent, raised to the Archbishopric of Toledo by Philip II., and had assisted at the last moments of Charles Fifth. The

whole of Europe was astonished when this learned and zealous prelate was accused of heresy, and a catechism, which he had compiled, examined by the Spanish Inquisition.

The rapid spread of heresy in the north of Europe caused great alarm in Spain, and several Bishops were suspected of teaching false doctrine. Paul IV. published a Bull, in 1559, in which he says that being afraid of the increase of heresy in Spain, he had cause to suspect several Spanish prelates, and therefore he authorized the Spanish Grand Inquisitor to examine into the doctrine of Bishops, Archbishops, and Primates in Spain; to take action against them if necessary, and, in case of evasion, to detain them in prison, but in all cases to send them to Rome as soon as possible, to be tried there by the proper ecclesiastical courts.

The Archbishop of Toledo was one of those proceeded against in virtue of powers granted by this Bull. He was arrested during an Episcopal visitation. The Grand Inquisitor sent the accusations to Rome, but detained him in prison.

When Pius IV. succeeded to Paul IV. he

allowed the trial to take place in Spain, but reserved to himself the final judgment. Philip wished that judgment should also be pronounced in Spain. The Grand Inquisitor having represented to him what an effect judgment pronounced in Madrid would have on the people, he suggested to the king that he merited the relaxation of ordinary jurisdiction on account of the great services he had done to the Church, and reminded him that the facts which had caused the Archbishop to be accused had taken place before his elevation to the Episcopate, and maintained that the Pope ought to send delegates to Spain to judge the case, in concert with the officers of the Inquisition.

Pius IV. was at length obliged to yield, and sent four prelates to Madrid. They were Buon Compagno, afterwards Gregory XIII., the Archbishop of Rosano, afterwards Urban VII., Aldobrandini, Auditor of the Rota, and the General of the Franciscans, who became Sixtus V. Hardly had they set foot in Spain when the death of the Pope recalled them to Rome.

Pius V. called the Archbishop of Toledo

to Rome, the Grand Inquisitor was deposed, and when King Philip and the Inquisitor opposed the execution of these orders, he sent a nuncio to Madrid, with power to suspend all officers of the Inquisition should they resist any longer. He also wrote to the king, who seeing the determined character of the new Pope, gave way, and the Archbishop was liberated from prison, eleven months after the elevation of Pius, and after seven years of imprisonment. He went to Rome at once with the nuncio, and having been tried, was fully acquitted.

St. Pius next turned his attention to liturgical reform, and made many corrections in the Roman Breviary and Missal. It was he who added the Gospel of St. John, "In the beginning was the Word, &c.," to the end of the Mass, to keep the inestimable benefit of the Incarnation perpetually before the minds of the people. He also re-arranged the beautiful office of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Ecclesiastical chant also claimed his care. It has always been the spirit of the Catholic Church to use the fine arts as a means of raising the mind to God, the author of all

beauty. Architecture, under the influence of Christianity, has caught something of her heavenward aspirations; the Gothic style shoots upwards, as if attempting to break the bonds which bind us to earth. Painting and sculpture, in the hands of Catholic artists, have cast off all taint of earth, opened to us the gate of paradise, and shown us man, not as seen on earth, but with something of the glorious spirituality of heaven; while music has raised her voice in chants and strains so sublime, that they seem to have been wafted from heaven by angels' wings.

Who has not felt his heart stirred by music? Like a siren, music can lure away the heart from purity and truth, but like an angel she can usher us into the presence of God. In the time of St. Pius church music was in danger of utterly declining. On the one side the cold puritanism of Lutheranism threatened to rob it of all æsthetic beauty; while the voluptuous softness of modern music threatened to estrange it from the service of God. The weird and strange character of ancient ecclesiastical chant had long ago ceased to please the popular ear, and at the

commencement of the sixteenth century had almost entirely disappeared from the churches. Yet nothing better had taken its place. Church music was often a travesty of the meaning of the words, and the musical composers of the time seemed determined to turn churches into theatres.

Various attempts had been made to stay this evil. Pope Marcellus II. meditated forbidding figured music altogether in the churches, but he only reigned twenty-two days, and died before carrying his design into execution. The Council of Trent contented itself with making some general regulations, and commanded all ecclesiastical students to study the church chant. Pius Fourth instituted a commission to examine the question, and placed St. Charles Borromeo and Cardinal Vitelozzi on the commission. St. Charles summoned to their aid an eminent musician, John Pierluigi, commonly called Palestrina, from the name of the city where he was born, requested him to compose a mass in which, while the modern science of music should be fully utilized, due decorum should be observed. With fear and trembling, for

on his success the fate of sacred music depended, Palestrina composed three masses, which were executed in the palace of Cardinal Vitelozzi. One of them he called the Mass of Pope Marcellus, and on the manuscript was written in trembling characters, "Aid me, O God." This Mass was first performed, June 29, 1565, in the presence of Pius IV., and the whole of the sacred college of Cardinals. Figured sacred music was saved. Pius IV. soon after died, but Pius V. had fallen under the influence of the genius of Palestrina. He created him master of the Papal Chapel, and encouraged him in every way in the reform of church music.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN we consider the immense amount of work which fell to St. Pius as Pope, we might naturally inquire what time he could devote to the worship of God, or to the care of his soul. Unceasingly engaged in attending to the wants of others, and to the good of the Church, we might suppose that he could give but little attention to private devotion. And yet such was far from being the case. He said Mass every day, and with such fervor that many Jews were converted by having assisted at it. He had a very tender devotion to the passion of Our Divine Lord, upon which he often meditated. He spent a long time in prayer early every morning, and became so absorbed in God, that his servants were frequently obliged to pull him by his habit when they had occasion to speak to him. He obtained from God all he asked in prayer. This became so well known that the Sultan of the Turks feared his prayers more than

the Christian armies. He studied the Holy Scriptures unceasingly, and read some portion of the Life of St. Dominic, or of some other saint of the Dominican Order, every day. He never omitted saying the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin every day. He prayed fervently for the dead, and often said that he had received marvellous assistance in his greatest needs from that devotion.

He gave audience to all kinds of persons, but particularly to the poor, whom he received with such kindness, and listened so patiently to all they had to say, that when he could not grant what they asked, they could see it was a great grief to him to refuse their petitions.

At his meals he often caused the letters of St. Bernard to Pope Eugenius to be read aloud, so that he might profit by the advice of that great Saint. His example caused several Cardinals to revive the ancient custom of reading at table.

St. Pius was accustomed to say that it was only right that the soul should receive those interior lights, which are its true food, while the body received the food which refreshed

it. His ill health never hindered him from attending to his public duties. Every morning when he had said mass he gave audience to those who had business with him, and they were so numerous that it was often late in the evening before he could dismiss the last one. To gain time he sometimes admitted the ambassadors of the Christian powers and men of important business during his meals; and it was no uncommon thing to see a long procession of monks and strangers of all nations wending its way through the narrow streets of Rome by torch-light, early in the morning to the Vatican, to secure an audience with the Pope. He gave one day each month exclusively to the poor.

Throughout his whole life St. Pius was remarkable for his austerity, and towards the end of his earthly career he became more and more self-denying. He suffered much from the stone; this pain he accepted as a penance for his sins and firmly refused all remedies, from which his modesty shrank. He never could be prevailed upon to take the nourishing food recommended by his medical attendants. His repast consisted of

eggs and wild chicory, or some other bitter herb, and he forbade any seasoning to be mixed with it. On fasting days he did not consider this austerity severe enough, and he ate only once, and even limited the number of glasses of water he drank.

If his austerity and spirit of penance was great, his humility was, if possible, even greater. Some serious difficulties having arisen between him and the Viceroy of Naples, he sent Cardinal Corregio an order to place that kingdom under interdict. The Cardinal not only chose to disobey this command, but boldly charged the Pope with unwise haste, and told him every one would look upon this severe step more as the effect of passion than as zeal for the good of the Church. Saint Pius humbly listened to this reproof, thanked the Cardinal for it, and afterwards, in a full consistory of Cardinals, cited his conduct as worthy of approval.

His humility made him wish to abdicate. Accordingly, one day he announced his intention of retiring to the monastery of the Dominican Order which he had built at Bosco, his native place, that he might end his life in

prayer and meditation. But his spiritual adviser and the Cardinals overcame his resolution, by representing to him that the Church needed him, and seeing that God had given him charge over it, it was his duty to fulfil that charge and not to abandon it. He yielded, but with the condition that if God allowed him to see the Turks finally driven out of Christian lands he should be allowed to retire.

He little loved the honors which his exalted dignity merited him. He regarded all such things as painful thorns, useful only insomuch as they warned him of the peril in which he was placed. He often declared that he had not had a single moment of peace since he had been Pope, that he was worthy of compassion, and that he bitterly repented having accepted a charge so far above his abilities.

He preserved his chastity inviolate. His confessors, during the process of his canonization, attested that he had never committed any fault, much less any sin against that angelic virtue.

He had a great horror of avarice, and al-

though he sorely needed money during the wars against the Turks, far from levying new taxes, as he was advised to do, he threw the schemes for raising money by taxes proposed to him into the fire. No one could tell the amount he gave in charity during a pestilence which raged in Rome in his pontificate. His love of justice was very great. He was once offered 15,000 crowns to grant a marriage dispensation. He examined the case, and finding sufficient reasons for granting it, acceded to the request, but steadily refused the money. And when it was represented that he could take it with a good conscience, he answered, in the words of the Council of Trent, that such dispensation should be granted "Raro, ex causa, et gratis," that is to say, "seldom, not without cause, and free of expense." A criminal condemned to death offered him 10,000 ducats to grant his life. St. Pius told him that justice is for the rich as well as the poor, and refused to listen to his request.

He forgave those who had rendered him an evil turn, and never did the memory of any injury remain in his mind. He pardoned a

libertine, who had lampooned him, saying to him: "My friend, I would have punished you if you had insulted the Pope, but because you attacked only Michael Ghislieri, go in peace."

He had so great a love for everything holy, and so fervent an admiration of justice and truth, that he hated sin and evil in a very energetic manner. Sometimes it happened that when he had given expression to his detestation of sin, his conscience troubled him lest in his zeal he should have gone beyond the bounds of charity, and he could not rest until he had begged pardon from the person he thought he had offended. The Duke of Savoy once sent the Count della Trinita as ambassador to the Pope. This Count, it will be remembered, had been one of his most violent opposers, when he was Inquisitor in Lombardy. St. Pius saw the Count enter his presence, and could not disguise his surprise. "My lord ambassador," he said, "I am that poor monk you once threatened to throw into a well." But, recalling God to his mind, he continued: "You see how God is always ready to assist the weak." The Count was much confused, but St. Pius assured him in

most affectionate words that he bore him no malice, cordially embraced him, and during the course of his diplomatic mission gave him every possible mark of confidence and esteem.

Many years before, when St. Pius, a poor friar, was travelling on foot along the hot and dusty road to Soncino, a young man, servant to a Milanese nobleman, seeing him carrying his bag on his shoulders, offered to give him a ride on his horse. St. Pius put his bag on the horse's back, and walked along side by side with the young man, entering into conversation with him. At length they came to a river, when the young man paid the father's passage on the ferry, and carried his bag on his horse's back until he came to the end of his journey. Saint Pius never forgot this kind service, and when he became Pope sent for the man, and gave him an honorable office in his household.

CHAPTER XV.

IN the midst of his manifold occupations, and loaded with honors, St. Pius never forgot that he was a son of St. Dominic, and showered benefits upon the Order to which he belonged. In the year 1568 he gave the first rank among the mendicant Orders to the Dominicans. In 1569 he published a decree, in which he confirmed all the privileges and indulgences granted by his predecessors to the Dominican confraternity of the Holy Rosary. In this decree he says: "The Roman Pontiffs have always been accustomed, when they were distressed by wars, spiritual or temporal, to beg the suffrages of the saints by prayers or litanies, and with holy David to raise their eyes to the holy mountains, full of confidence, and with a certain hope of succor. Determined by their example, and inspired, as is believed, by the Holy Spirit, the blessed Dominic, founder of the Order of Friar Preachers, on an occasion similar to that

in which we now find ourselves, at a time when heresy blinded a very large number of secular persons, turning his eyes towards the heavens where the glorious Virgin Mary reigns, conceived an easy way, within the reach of all, called the Rosary, or psalter of the Mother of God, by repeating the angelic salutation one hundred and fifty times, in imitation of the Psalms of David. We ourselves also turn towards that mountain from whence comes all help, with eyes bathed in tears, and we tenderly exhort all faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, in the name of the Lord, to follow his example."

He always wore the Dominican habit, and was very careful that the wool of which it was made should be of the coarsest, and once he severely reproved his major-domo, who provided him with a new habit of fine texture, steadily refusing to wear it.

He had a very remarkable devotion to St. Thomas Aquinas.—Pope John the Twenty-second had canonized this holy saint, but Saint Pius declared him Doctor of the Universal Church, and caused a very fine edition of his works to be published.

During the Carnival he always retired to the monastery of Santa Sabina, and there among his brethren he offered his prayers as an atonement for the sins of the people, who in their wild joy frequently forgot God and disobeyed his holy laws.

CHAPTER XVI.

LET us now briefly review all that St. Pius did in a few years for the good of the Catholic Church, intrusted by God to his care.

He enforced the execution of the wise decrees of the holy Council of Trent, in spite of negligence and opposition; banished many abuses from Rome, the capital of the Christian world; converted Jews by words and example; purified Catholic art and music; extirpated brigands from the states of the Church; promoted education, and reformed many religious orders. He threw the mantle of the Church over America, and defended the liberty of its natives. In his own life and conduct he showed the Catholic world an example of the salutary effect of Catholic doctrine on the weakness of human nature. He combated heresy and gave it an example of true reform, based not on the destructive doctrines of Luther, but founded on true Catholic principles.

Such, in a few words, was the work St. Pius had already done in the Church of God.

We now come to the crowning glory of his life, the great victory obtained by his exertions, and in answer to his prayers, by the Christian armies over the Turks. For six or seven centuries the Turks had been the great enemy of the Christian religion. Ardently attached to their own superstition, they had long and successfully propagated it. The principles on which it was founded, that every true believer was bound to hate all other religions, that only one religion could exist in a state, that it was a most meritorious action to propagate the true religion, even by force of arms, that man is absolutely predestined to an eternity of misery or happiness, consequently that everything which happens is fate, that every true believer in Mahomet must offer to any Christian so unhappy as to fall into his power the bitter alternative of apostasy or death, all this gave a baneful power to Mahometanism, and by pandering to man's passions, allowing him four wives, and as many female slaves as he could afford to keep, the religion of Mahomet made

willing slaves of its deluded disciples. No wonder, then, that this religion, so cruel to its enemies, so indulgent to its votaries, should have gained such rapid progress, and have taken so firm a hold on the people even in Christian lands. At the death of Mahomet, in the year 652, nearly the whole of Arabia had embraced his religion, and within fifty years of his death it had spread into Syria, Palestine, Egypt, North Africa and even into Spain.

For centuries the Turks had been gradually advancing into Europe, beaten back from time to time, yet always extending their conquests. St. Pius was alive to the danger, and as soon as he became Pope set about to oppose their further progress.

The knights of St. John, after a siege of six months, having been forced to evacuate the island of Rhodes, the Emperor Charles the Fifth offered them either the island of Malta, Goza or the City of Tripoli. The latter city was situated very badly for defence, lying in the very midst of Turks. Nor was Goza better able to sustain a siege. The Grand Master Villiers de l'Isle Adam, therefore,

chose the island of Malta, which he at once put into a state of defence. He died in the year 1534.

After several successors came the heroic Lavalette. He was attacked in the year 1551 by Sultan Solyman the Magnificent, against whom he defended the island for four months. Defeat was staring him in the face, when several Sicilian ships appeared on the horizon, and the Turks hastily raised the siege and set sail, leaving Lavalette and his brave knights masters of the island. Only six hundred were left alive, all of them either wounded or incapable of carrying arms. Lavalette went to nearly all the Christian courts to beg assistance. He received warm encouragement from Pius the Fifth, who wrote a brief to him, encouraging him to remain in Malta, and to defend Europe against the Turks. St. Pius wrote also to the Viceroy of Naples and Sicily, to ask him to give all the aid he could, and sent nuncios to the princes of Italy, to the Doge of Venice, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and Philip the Second of Spain. He himself gave 57,000 gold crowns.

The clergy of the kingdom of Naples were

to be taxed, and Pius, in order to further the good work, gave a dispensation to the workmen employed in the fortifications at Malta to work on Sundays after hearing Mass.

No sooner were the fortifications completed than the Turks again attacked Malta. They were repulsed. But they boldly sailed up the Adriatic into the bay of Venice. As soon as St. Pius heard of this new danger to Christianity he appointed Paul Orsini general of his navy, and sent him to join the Spanish fleet, and to give his personal encouragement to the good work he went to Ancona, to encourage the enlistment of soldiers and the preparation of ships.

The Turks again retreated, but suddenly attacked the island of Scio. The inhabitants were celebrating Easter when the Turkish fleet appeared on the sea. It was not long before the whole island was given up to pillage. Scio was tributary to the Ottoman power, and was governed by the Guistiniani family. The Bishop, Timothy Guistiniani, of the Order of St. Dominic, seeing the barbarians rushing towards the high altar in the cathedral, took the Blessed Sacrament from

the tabernacle, ready to die rather than allow such a profanation. His bearing was so dignified and majestic that the Turks retired with the greatest respect. But the whole of his family was taken prisoner, and sent to Caffa. Two young princes of the family, 10 and 12 years of age, were taken captive, and sent to the palace of the Sultan to be educated in the Mohammedan religion. The Sultan promised to restore to them the estates and fortunes of their family if they would apostatize and persuade their subjects to do the same. But the brave boys refused to purchase liberty at such a price. When all persuasions failed they were condemned to die under the lash. The younger one was tortured first. When he had suffered for some time the strokes were suspended and life was offered him if he would hold up his finger as a mark of obedience to the Sultan's wishes. He closed his fingers tightly and asked for death, which soon came. His brother, having been whipped, was left to die. He lingered three days in fearful agonies, thanking God for the grace of being thought worthy of giving his life for the faith.

When St. Pius heard this, he quickly called a Consistory, and in a voice broken with sobs related what had occurred. He wrote to Charles the 9th of France, who had entered into alliance with the Sultan, to beg him to use his influence for the liberation of the princes of the Guistiniani family, upon which the Sultan gave them their liberty. The intrepid Bishop Timothy Guistiniani obtained permission to return to Scio. He even journeyed to Constantinople to obtain the ransom of some captives. While there he obtained permission to build a new Cathedral, the old one having been destroyed.

In the year 1569 the Italian borders of the Adriatic offered a favorable scope for an Ottoman attack. A famine desolated the country, the magistrates could not provide sufficient food, and the public treasury was emptied. A fire broke out in the Venetian arsenal, which destroyed all the powder, thus the Venetians found themselves without food or means of defence. The Sultan, hearing this, determined to take advantage of their distress and attack them.

When St. Pius learnt this new danger he

equipped twelve ships, which the Venetians had sent to Ancona without crew or soldiers, and sent Louis de Torres, clerk of the Apostolic chamber, to Spain with a brief to Philip the Second, begging him to join the Christian princes in a league against the Turks, whereupon Philip promised to send his fleet to aid that of the Pope. The ships were ready for service in the summer of 1570. The command of the fleet he entrusted to Mark Antony Colonna. The Grand Master of Malta sent three ships, the Duke of Savoy four, Venice twelve and Spain fifteen.

They sailed to the Isle of Cyprus to deliver Nicosia, the capital, and Famagosta, a seaport, both of which had been invested by the Turks. Arrived there they found Nicosia in the hands of the enemy, who had pillaged the town, and slain the heroic Bishop. The Turkish commander filled four ships with treasures and captive maidens and sent them a present to Sultan Selim. One of these unhappy maidens, knowing the infamy to which she and her companions would be exposed, noticed a soldier entering the powder magazine, and threw a light into it, which exploded

the vessel, the fire caught the other three ships, and all were destroyed. Thus this courageous maiden saved herself and her companions from a life of dishonor worse than death.

After the capture of Nicosia the Turks marched to Famagosta. When the Christian fleet arrived near Cyprus, national dissension unhappily broke out among the commanders, and instead of going to the succor of the besieged inhabitants of Famagosta, they returned to their own countries.

One can readily imagine the bitter sorrow and shame which filled the heart of St. Pius, when he heard that the Christian fleet had sailed almost in sight of the beleaguered city, and then returned, without any attempt to succor their Christian brethren. But his courage failed not, and putting his trust in God, after fasting and praying, he again sent ambassadors to the Christian princes, and with signal success. Austria, Spain, Portugal, Poland and the Republic of Venice entered into a league with the Pope to attack the Turks, and to deliver Europe from their fatal sway. A fleet was again fitted out, and put

under the command of Don John of Austria. Many states sent soldiers, at the earnest request of St. Pius. War was declared against the Turks, in the united names of the Pope, Philip the 2d of Spain, and the Republic of Venice. Pius engaged himself to furnish twelve well-manned ships, 3,000 men on foot, 270 horsemen, and to pay one-sixth of the expense. When all was ready Pius celebrated Holy Mass in the Vatican, before the Ambassadors of all the Catholic powers, and at the foot of the altar he announced to the Roman people the formation of the league. He ordered the devotion of the forty hours in all the churches in Rome, and assisted at three days' processions to the Basilicas, during which the Rosary was recited. He published a jubilee for the whole world, to call down upon the Christian army the benediction of God. Such were the events that led to the glorious naval battle of Lepanto.

When all was ready Don John of Austria, the supreme commander of the fleet and armies, left Spain in haste, and sent the Count of Cariglio to Rome to excuse him from seeking a personal audience with the Pope.

St. Pius received the Count gladly, and embracing him said: "Tell his highness never to forget the cause given him to defend; tell him he will obtain the victory, because I promise it in God's name." He spoke similar words to Mark Antony Colonna: "Go," he said, when in a loud voice he blessed him and his fellow officers. "Go in the name of Christ, fight against his enemies; you will win."

At Naples, during a solemn High Mass, Cardinal Grenville bestowed the baton of command upon Don John, and presented him with a standard sent by the Pope. From Naples Don John went to Messina, where Cardinal Odescalchi, Nuncio of the Pope to the army, ordered a three days' fast, published a plenary indulgence in the form of a jubilee, distributed Agnus Dei blessed especially by the Pope for this purpose, and gave the soldiers holy communion with his own hands.

CHAPTER XVII.

IT must have been a grand sight to see the magnificent fleet raise anchor on the morning of September 15, 1571, under the bright rays of the Sicilian sun, and sail away to meet the enemy. It was divided into four squadrons. Don John commanded the main part, comprising 70 ships; Andrew Doria led the right wing of 54 ships; Venieri, the left, composed of the same number of Venetian vessels, and Mark Antony Colonna commanded the Pope's vessels, while John of Cardone went in advance with ten ships to discover the enemy.

St Pius was present in spirit with the Christian fleet. Night and day he poured forth prayers to God for its success. And with reason did the holy pontiff implore the help of heaven, for the triumph of Mahometanism meant persecution of the cruellest kind for Christians, and threatened the very existence of God's holy Church on earth.

Famagosta, the city attacked in Cyprus by the Turks, having been honorably and bravely defended for eleven months, the Commander of the Turkish army, Mustapha Pascha, pretended to grant most honorable terms of capitulation to Bragadini the Governor; but just at the moment when he was entering the tent of the Turkish General to arrange the embarkation of the vanquished Christians, Mustapha, in a sudden transport of violent passion, ordered all the Christians to be put into chains. The unfortunate Governor was mutilated and condemned to carry stones for repairing the walls of the city. After three days of this humiliating work, Mustapha ordered him to be flayed alive. During his torments Bragadini recited the "Miserere," and when he came to the verse, "Grant me a clean heart, O God," he died. His martyrdom took place August 17, 1571. His skin, stuffed with straw, was hoisted on the sail yard of one of the ships. Later on it was sent by the Christians to Venice, where it was carefully preserved as a holy relic in the Church of Saints John and Paul.

All the neighboring islands fell into the hands of the Turks at the same time.

When the news of these new disasters reached Rome, Saint Pius increased his alms and austerities. He ordered all the members of the convents and monasteries to pray without ceasing, before the Adorable Sacrament of the altar. He spent hours himself in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, and when called away for any duty caused some one to take his place until he returned.

One day his treasurer took him from the altar to attend some important business with several Cardinals. All at once, as they were busily engaged, St. Pius rose suddenly, and ran to the window. He opened it eagerly, and leaned out a few moments in profound attention. His attitude, his whole features, his manner showed great excitement, and returning quickly, he cried out: "Let us not speak about business, it is not the time. Let us hasten to thank God; our army has gained the victory." He dismissed his attendants, and threw himself on his knees, in prayer, his face bathed in grateful tears.

The Cardinals quickly spread the news in Rome. They took notice of the date and hour, October 7th, five o'clock in the after-

noon. It was the very moment when the cross triumphed over the crescent in the Bay of Lepanto.

The Turks had been warned of the approach of the Christian fleet, but refused to believe it, not understanding how Christians could show so much courage. Don John reconnoitred the enemy, and then gave the order for attack. He disposed his ships in four separate bodies, taking the centre himself. He hoisted the standard given by the Pope and when the figure of Our Divine Lord was seen, cries of ardent love and devotion saluted it all along the line. He then went from galley to galley, in a small boat, haranguing the soldiers on each ship, and assuring them of a glorious victory. When he boarded his own ship again he knelt down on deck before the holy standard, and called upon God with deep humility to favor the brave men who had devoted their lives to the honor of his holy name. At the same moment a religious gave the signal for prayer, and in a moment every soldier, turning his eyes towards the crucifix, devoutly made an act of contrition for his sins, and begged the for-

giveness of God. When they arose every one was filled with courage, feeling that the honor of God and the safety of the Christian Church depended on his own exertions.

From the very commencement of the combat the elements seemed to favor the Christians. The winds were certainly favorable, and this circumstance increased the soldiers' belief in victory. Hali Pascha, the commander of the Turkish fleet, ordered the first shot. Don John answered by a round of cannon from his own ship. And then the combat became general. The Turks filled the air with their savage cries, to which the discordant sounds of their military music was added. The ships were soon enveloped in a cloud of dense smoke from the cannon, but the winds blew it on to the Turkish fleet, a decided advantage for the Christians.

At the commencement of the battle the Turks were confident of success, and their first attack was terrible; but their confidence soon changed into surprise, and they quickly learned the invincible spirit which animated their adversaries. In less than three hours the issue was no longer doubtful. Hali

Pascha was killed by a musket shot, and a Spanish soldier pulled down the Turkish banner. Colonna captured the ship which contained the children of Hali Pascha. This battle was, in fact, so terrible a punishment to the Turks that it seemed as if God was revenging centuries of cruelty and insults to the Christian faith. The slaughter was so great that the sea was covered with men's arms and legs, drowning men, torn sails, masts, oars and armor, all floating in the water. 10,000 were taken prisoners, among whom were nearly 200 captains. 170 ships fell into the power of the Christians, 90 others were cast on shore and either burnt or dashed to pieces. The Christian loss was small in comparison, about 7500 killed, but thousands were wounded. 15,000 Christian prisoners were set at liberty. Night obliged the Christians to discontinue the pursuit. The Turkish prisoners afterwards declared that they had seen Jesus Christ appear in the sky, with the Holy Apostles Saints Peter and Paul and a multitude of angels, menacing them, which had caused them such terror that they could no longer know what they were doing. This

miracle is commemorated in a picture still preserved in the Vatican. Dispatches were at once sent to the Pope to announce the glorious tidings. But Contarini, to whom they were entrusted, was detained by tempests. Saint Pius, sure of victory by divine revelation, could not conceal his astonishment that no news was received from Don John of Austria. It was not until the end of October that the Doge of Venice, who had received the happy tidings, sent the messenger to Rome to communicate it to the Pope. He arrived in Rome at midnight, and was at once admitted into the Pope's presence. When Saint Pius heard all the particulars of the glorious and complete victory, he fell on his knees, and cried out in the fulness of his heart: "He that is mighty hath done great things unto me and holy is his name." He then caused all the inmates of the pontifical palace to be assembled to join with him in thanking God. The next day the "Te Deum" was solemnly sung in the four great basilicas, and in all the parish and monastic churches in Rome. The universal belief of the Roman people was that the Blessed Virgin Mary had granted this

victory in answer to the prayers of Saint Pius. In memory of this great victory St. Pius added the invocation "Auxilium Christianorum Ora pro nobis," "Help of Christians, pray for us," to the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

He desired, above all things, to lead the people, flushed with victory, to a spirit of thankfulness to God, and, in order to teach them the value of prayer in human necessities, he instituted a feast, to be observed on the anniversary of this battle, October 7, under the name of "Our Lady of Victories."

The title of this feast was changed in the 16th century, by Pope Gregory 13th, to "Our Lady of the Holy Rosary," under which title it is now kept in the Catholic Church on the first Sunday of October.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IT now only remained for Saint Pius to crown a saintly life with a holy death. During the winter of the year 1571, he suffered excessive pains from the stone; early in January his physicians declared that if he did not undergo an operation his life would be in danger. His modesty shrank from it, and he lived on until it came to Lent, when, although his weakness was very great, he began to fast as strictly as when he was in sound health. His attendants, wishing to keep him alive, mixed gravy with the vegetables he ate, but as soon as he tasted meat he said, "Would you wish me, during the short time I have to live, to break the laws which I have always kept and which God has given me the grace to keep for fifty-three years?"

When the pain increased he was seen to go and kneel before a crucifix, and devoutly kissing it, often heard to murmur: "Lord! Lord! increase the pain, but also increase my patience."

He celebrated Holy Mass as often as he felt strong enough to do so, and when not able to ascend to the altar he assisted at a Mass said in his own room, and communicated often. On Holy Thursday he wished to receive Holy Communion from the hands of his nephew, Cardinal Alexandrine, and when the Cardinal pronounced the words, "May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul to life everlasting," he said, "I pray you apply to me the words which the Church uses for the dying: 'The Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ conduct your soul to eternal life.'"

The following day, Good Friday, April 4, 1572, he caused a large cross to be carried into his oratory, and arising, went with bare feet to adore it, and to bathe the five wounds of our crucified Lord with his tears.

The Pope's public audiences having been suspended, to allow him to spend the days yet left him in preparing for eternity, the report spread abroad in the city that he was dead, and Rome was filled with mourning and lamentations; and thus it happened that the holy pontiff was able to learn the fulfilment

of the pious wish he made on his elevation to the pontifical dignity, that the Romans would weep more for his death than they had done at his accession.

He was so much moved, on hearing their grief, that he wished to give them his pontifical blessing once more. His spirit triumphed over his body: he donned his pontifical vestments on Easter Sunday, and was carried to the loggia, or balcony, above the principal entrance of St. Peter's, and for the last time blessed the people, with a voice so loud that he could be heard by every one in that vast multitude.

A deputation of the clergy and Roman nobles waited on him, to offer their congratulations on his supposed recovery, but Saint Pius quickly told them of his real state. "My children," he said, "I have no longer any business to transact except with God. The account which I shall soon have to render to him of all the deeds and words of my life requires me to employ all the powers of my soul to prepare for it."

Nevertheless, he wished to take a solemn farewell of the relics of those Saints deposited

in Rome, and on the twenty-first of April he announced his intention of making the stations of the seven churches; and it was in vain that his physicians and attendants attempted to shake his resolution. He set out on foot, upheld by the arms of attendants. His face was so pale that he seemed to be on the point of death. Mark Antony Colonna, who met him, was so alarmed at his state that he threw himself on his knees to beg him to be allowed to be carried back in a litter to his palace. The Holy Father sweetly set him aside and patiently continued on his self-imposed penance, rejoicing to suffer like his Divine Lord who trod the road to Calvary. At the Basilica of St. John Lateran he was again besought to discontinue his penance, and at least to defer the remainder until the following day. He only raised his eyes to heaven, and said, "He who made everything will perfect his work." He ascended the Scala Santa on his knees, kissed the uppermost step three times, and could hardly tear himself away from the holy place.

On his return to the Vatican he learned of the arrival of a number of English Catholics,

who had been forced by the persecutions of the tyrant Elizabeth to leave their native country. He sent for them to his presence, loaded them with every mark of favor, asked many questions about the state of religion in England, and gave them into the care of his nephew, Cardinal Alexandrine, bidding him attend to their temporal necessities. When he bade them farewell, he was heard to say: "O my God! Thou knowest that I have always been ready to shed my blood for the salvation of that nation."

He was so accustomed to the thought of death that he was never seen so calm as when death came near; and when his severe sufferings drew tears from his attendants, he alone was tranquil, and forgetting himself, he set himself to console them.

He ordered prayers to be recited day and night at his bedside, and especially loved to hear the words of the seven penitential psalms, which he requested should be read very slowly, so that he could excite his heart to contrition at every verse. The passion of Christ was read to him several times, and every time the Holy Name of Jesus was pro-

nounced he uncovered his head, and when his hands became cold and lifeless he asked that some one should do that holy service for him.

On the morning of April 30th, he announced that his hours were numbered, and begged the Bishop of Segnia to administer to him the sacrament of extreme unction.

He desired to kneel once more, and in that humble position prayed earnestly for the good of the Catholic Church. He did not wish his relations to be near him at the time of death, with the exception of Cardinal Alexandrine. He confided his last instructions to members of the sacred college and requested that Father Caballi, Master General of the Dominican Order, and Cardinals Rusticucci, Montalta, and Aquaviva should be with him at the hour of death.

Once, when every one believed him to have passed away, he revived, and with an animation wonderful in a dying man, addressed all present as follows: "If you love my mortal life, full of an infinity of miseries, you ought much more to love that unchangeable and blessed life which by the mercy of God I hope soon

to enjoy in heaven. You know well that the greatest wish of my life has been to see the overthrow of the empire of the infidels, but because my sins and crimes have made me unworthy of enjoying the satisfaction of so happy an event, I adore the depths of the judgment of God, and acknowledge myself to be unworthy of that grace. It only remains for me, then, to recommend to you, with all my soul, that same Church which God committed to my care. Do your utmost to elect a successor full of zeal for the glory of God, who will be attached to no other interest in this world, and who will seek nothing but the welfare of Christianity."

When he said these words a little incident happened which proves the delicate perfection of his chastity. In the movement of his arms one of them became bare. This wounded his natural purity, and he quickly tried to cover it again with the sleeve of his woolen tunic.

He died reciting the Vesper hymn of paschal time. It was May day, 1572, in the evening. He was 68 years of age, and had reigned as Pope 6 years and 3 months.

His physicians wished to testify to his superhuman courage, and made an autopsy, when they found three stones in the bladder. They declared his patience in such sufferings was little short of miraculous.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE body of St. Pius was placed in a chapel in the Vatican, and the next day lay in state in St. Peter's. The crowd was immense, and the eagerness of the people to obtain some relic or memento of this great man and saint was such that they cut off the ornaments of his pontifical vestments and even attempted to pull out hairs from his beard and head, until the Swiss Guard were forced to interfere. For four days the crowd continued to press in, and the vast edifice was filled the whole time. Every one brought a rosary or some pious object, with which they touched his body. At the end of the day his holy body was temporarily placed in the chapel of St. Andrew. He had wished to be buried in the church of the Dominican monastery he had built at Bosco, his native village, not thinking himself worthy of being among the other Popes in Rome, and had caused a simple tomb to be erected where

he wished to be buried, but when Sixtus the Fifth came to the pontifical chair he would not allow the body of his friend and benefactor to be taken away from Rome, and at his own expense built a magnificent chapel in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, in which he placed a white marble monument, and there Saint Pius was buried January 9th, 1588.

The death of the holy Pope caused great grief throughout the Catholic world. In Spain it was divinely revealed to Saint Teresa, who in presence of her sisters cried out in tears, "Do not be astonished, my sisters! weep rather with me, because the Church is widowed of her holy pastor."

Pope Sixtus the Fifth caused the process of canonization to be commenced, which was continued by Paul the Fifth and Urban the Eighth. The auditors of the Rota, having examined 146 witnesses, testified that Saint Pius had lived and died a virgin, that he never committed a single mortal sin, that he practised all the Christian virtues in an heroic degree, and that God had given him the gift of prophecy, and the grace of working miracles.

After this the sacred congregation decreed that masses of the dead should no longer be said for him, but that on the anniversary of his death the Mass of the Most Holy and Adorable Trinity should be said. Urban the Eighth confirmed this decree.

The Superiors of the Dominican Order from time to time asked for his canonization, in which they were seconded by the kings of France, Spain, and Portugal. Father Thomas Rocaberti, Master General of the Dominican Order, having succeeded in obtaining the canonization of Saint Louis Bertrand and Saint Rose of Lima, took up the cause of Saint Pius with much enthusiasm in the year 1670, and in which he was much aided by the king of France. Saint Pius was beatified by Clement X., April 27th, 1672, and solemnly canonized by Clement XI., May 22d, 1712.

Many miracles were worked by him. He chased demons from the bodies of several possessed persons, and abandoned women were converted merely by gazing at his body lying in state after death. The Agnus Dei blessed by him were found to be possessed of particular power against fires, drowning, and

sudden danger of death. An inundation of the Tiber was stayed in a moment by throwing one of them into the flood, and some soldiers who piously carried them about with them became well-nigh invulnerable.

Pilgrims who go to Rome do not fail to visit the chapel of St. Pius in the Dominican Monastery of Santa Sabina. This chapel is the cell which he occupied when in that monastery. Above the altar is the picture of the miracle of the crucifix, on the right Saint Philip Neri is predicting the tiara to the holy religious, and on the left St. Pius picking up dust from the Vatican, and giving it to the Polish Ambassadors, who had begged some relics, saying to them, "Here is what you desire; this dust was bathed for centuries with the blood of martyrs." On the wall opposite the altar is Saint Pius, kneeling and anxiously gazing through his palace window, while an angel at his side announces the victory of Lepanto. On the altar is a very beautiful crucifix, which belonged to him. It was preserved in the Vatican, until Pius the Ninth, during one of his visits to Santa Sabina, gave it to the Fathers, saying it was to them

rather than to any one else it should belong.

His feast is celebrated throughout the Christian world on May 5th.

Prayer.

Anthem. O Shepherd-Father, deign to keep
Thy mind still on the folded sheep;
Plead with the Judge now as of old,
For all within the faithful fold.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed Pius,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God, who wast pleased to elect the Blessed Pius to the office of chief Pontiff, for the defeat of the enemies of thy Church, and the restoration of divine worship, grant that we may be defended by his watchful guardianship, and be so intent upon thy holy service that, overcoming all the wiles of our enemies, we may enjoy eternal peace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE

HOLY MARTYRS OF GORCUM.

THE HOLY MARTYRS OF GORCUM.

ST. JOHN OF COLOGNE, OF THE ORDER OF FRIAR PREACHERS, AND NINETEEN COMPANIONS.

July 19th.

IN the sixteenth century Holland and Belgium were unwillingly subject to Spain. Protestantism was professed by large numbers of the inhabitants, and the Protestant leaders, making use of the people's natural enmity towards Spain, a staunch Catholic power, strove to impress upon their minds the idea that in order to be lovers of their own country they must belong to the Protestant party, and that the Catholics must necessarily be the friends of Spain, and enemies of their fatherland. This must be born in mind while reading the following narrative of the sufferings and glorious death of the noble martyrs of Gorcum.—The

King of Spain, Charles the Fifth, had introduced the Spanish Inquisition into Holland and Belgium, in order to check the rapid increase of heresy. When Philip the Second succeeded him his zeal for the Catholic faith led him to adopt still more severe measures. The Flemish Protestants, feeling insulted that the most important offices of state should be exclusively filled by Spaniards, placed themselves under the united leadership of the Prince of Orange, the Count of Egmont, and the Count of Hoorne.—William Prince of Orange, the recognized leader of the Protestant party, organized a petition to the King, signed not only by a large number of Protestants, but also by many Catholics, requesting that the Inquisition should be suppressed, and that all measures against heretics should be abolished.

Not obtaining all they desired, the Protestants rose simultaneously all over the country, many disaffected Calvinists having returned from France to aid them. They sacked churches and convents, destroyed images and holy pictures, and even damaged the magnificent Cathedral of Antwerp, the pride of the country. In Brabant alone four hundred

churches were sacked. This formidable rising was, however, suppressed, and Philip, taking the government of the country from the wise and prudent Margaret of Parma, placed it in the hands of the stern Duke of Alva, whom he sent into the country at the head of an army of picked troops.

The Duke entered Brussels, 22d August, 1567, and quickly brought the leaders of the rebellion to condign punishment. The Counts of Egmont and Hoorne were executed. The Prince of Orange, who, assisted by his brother, Louis of Nassau, attacked the Spaniards in Frieseland, Brabant and Guelderland, was defeated, upon which he carried the war from land to sea. The northern provinces then rose in rebellion, and it was at this juncture that the history of the Martyrdom of the Gorcum Martyrs commences.

Gorcum, originally Gorinchen, is a little town in Holland of six or seven thousand inhabitants, on the river Meuse, about twenty miles from Dordrecht. It is in the midst of a fertile country, and is chiefly noted for its salmon fisheries.

At the time when our narrative commences

the Catholics appeared to be more numerous in Gorcum than the Calvinists. The parish priest, Father Leonard Wichel, maintained that he could count two Catholics to every heretic; but there were many who were Catholics only so long as the Spanish flag floated over their heads, and this was quickly seen when the news of the taking of Dordrecht by the Gueux reached their ears. The Catholics of Gorcum knew well that they would be the next to be attacked, and what they would have to expect.

But although they trembled for their fortunes and families, and still more for the priests and religious, yet, as often happens in similar cases, they took no steps to put the town in a state of defence. There was a Capuchin monastery in town, well known for the holiness of its inmates. The Guardian, Father Nicolas Pik, was a native of Gorcum, and his brothers, sisters, and relations lived there. His nephew, Rutger Estius, brother of the historian of that name, a pious young man, did his utmost to persuade Father Nicolas to retire to a place of safety, and told him the horrors and cruelty of which the Gueux had

been guilty in other towns. "All that is very alarming," answered Father Nicolas; "my natural weakness shudders at the thought of it, but I think I should be tempting God if I were to flee before such evils. Neither I nor my brothers will do so. We trust ourselves to God. If he puts us to the proof he will give us the courage to bear it." The young man insisted that prudence is a Christian virtue, and that it is no sin or disgrace to fly from persecution. "Perhaps not," answered the Guardian, "but have you thought of the bad effect which our flight would cause? Do you think to abandon our friends would encourage them to defend themselves? No! on the contrary it would only make matters worse." But although he and his community refused to fly, he ceased not in public and private to advise every one to hold himself ready for all events, and to be prepared to die rather than to deny the faith. Yet, as his nephew's fears were well founded, he sent the church plate, the relics of the Saints, and the monastery library to the residence of his brother-in-law, the father of Rutger Estius; but, thinking that the heretics would certainly

plunder the houses of the principal Catholics he afterwards caused them to be taken to the citadel. This citadel was built on the town walls, and was bathed at its feet by the waters of the river Meuse. It was looked upon as a secure refuge in time of need, and it was hoped it would hold out against all attacks, until succor could be obtained from some of those neighboring cities still loyal to the king.

In the meantime, the Protestants of Gorcum sent messengers to Dordrecht to advise a sudden attack upon the town, and at eight o'clock in the morning of June 25th, thirteen vessels, carrying one hundred and fifty soldiers, suddenly appeared, coming up the river from Dordrecht. They sailed almost to the walls of Gorcum, and their appearance caused great joy to the Protestants, and cast dismay into the hearts of the faithful Catholics.

Father Nicolas Pik immediately called his friars together, and after a short but warm exhortation, gave each one permission to seek safety where he pleased. "And you, what will you do?" asked several among them. "I hope," he answered, "to remain in the con-

vent as long as I can, and then to retire to the citidal." "We will not leave you," they all cried, and refused to abandon him. The following day the Gueux barricaded the river, both above and below the town, and made a proclamation, offering political and religious liberty, reduction of taxes, and cheap living; the usual baits of revolutionists.

The whole Franciscan community took refuge in the citadel, carrying with them what articles of value still remained in the convent. There they were joined by several of the most influential Catholics of Gorcum. The two secular priests, Nicolas Poppel and Leonard Wichel, had neglected nothing to animate the courage of the citizens. They had visited the magistrates, made the tour of the walls, and harangued the soldiers, but as the Gueux had been cunning enough to proclaim toleration for the Catholic faith, the citizens did not see why they should fight for what had not yet been attacked; so the parish priests hardly received a patient hearing.

CHAPTER II.

THE refugees had no sooner entered the citadel than the Gueux were secretly introduced into the town by their partisans. Their leader, Martin Brant, or Brancio, a Fleming, was possessed of considerable military talent. He had been a dyke-digger, and afterwards a pirate under William Lumay, Count de la Marck. His daring, coolness, and strength had acquired him an ascendancy over his coarse companions. As soon as he found himself master of Gorcum he called the inhabitants together in the great square by ringing the bells. He proposed that they should all vow eternal hatred to the Duke of Alva and the Spanish conquerors of the country, and swear allegiance to the Prince of Orange. Those who were ready to take the oath were to raise their hats, and immediately the hats of all present rose into the air to the loud cries of "Long live the Gueux." Brant then called the senate, or town-council

together, to make arrangements to complete the success of the day.

The citadel, in which the religious and Catholic inhabitants had taken refuge, was hardly in a state to make a long resistance. It was ill provisioned, and there were no artisans to make repairs, nor surgeons to tend the wounded. The sole hope of the refugees was to hold out until they could obtain succor from elsewhere. Gaspard Turc, the Governor, counted upon his sons to obtain assistance and relief from Utrecht, and showed letters from the Governor in which he promised this help, therefore when Brant summoned him to surrender, his answer was resolute. Brant laughed when he received it, and placing his artillery opposite the weakest point, opened fire. The besieged did their best to return fire, but the disproportion of their forces was evident. Brant had upwards of two hundred, while the Governor had no more than twenty able men; the others were either unused to handle arms, or prevented from doing so by their sacred calling. So he could not long hinder the Gueux from setting fire to the door of the first enclosure of the fortress, and

was obliged to retire to the second line of defence. Near midnight loud shouts announced that the Gueux had forced the second enclosure, and the little garrison had barely time to retire to the last enclosure, called the Blue Tower, on account of the color of the stone of which it was built.

The Governor hoped to be able to hold out in this tower until the expected arrival of his son. It was surrounded by a fosse full of water. Built of blocks of stone, to the sight it presented an appearance of great strength, but when the enemy, encouraged by success, commenced firing into the openings, and nothing was seen of the promised assistance, the soldiers began to murmur, said that the Governor had deceived them, and that they could fight no longer against such great odds. Some of them threw away their arms and others passed over to the enemy.

The female refugees, believing that all was lost, now raised a clamor which their fathers and husbands could not appease. The Governor's wife and daughters clung to his knees, held his arms, and besought him to have pity upon them. He would not listen, and called

Father Nicolas Pik to ask his advice. Father Pik counselled him to wait for the daylight, to see if succor would not arrive.

Cannon balls continued to follow one another in quick succession, and the tower trembled as if shaken to its foundations. The disorder increased in the interior, the Governor demanded a parley. He proposed the surrender of the tower on conditions accepted by Brant, that every one in the citadel, laics or ecclesiastics, should be allowed to go free and unharmed, and that all property within the tower walls was to be given to the conquerors.

During the parley the ecclesiastics prepared for the worst, confessed one to another, and heard the confessions of the prisoners. Nicolas Poppel, the parish priest, had carried the most adorable Sacrament with him, and thus all were enabled to receive holy communion from his hands; the Gueux entered the tower, and the Catholics saw, with sorrow and deep shame, how many of the citizens, and even those they had counted among the best, had joined them. Brant at once ordered all within the fortress to go into the

upper story. There the Gueux surrounded them, shouting, "All that you have is ours." "Show us your hiding places." "Open your purses." "Turn out your pockets." And they stripped and searched them, treating them, especially the Capuchins, with great cruelty. They could not believe they had no silver or gold or precious objects about them.

At last they thrust all the captives into the kitchen, and afterwards into another room, where they wrote down their names. This was to enable two influential members of the town council to satisfy their vengeance upon some of the prisoners. And as soon as they had read the list they called upon Theodore Bommer, and took him and his son away. They had hated him for a long time for being one of the firmest and most zealous Catholics. They charged him with having called the Gueux, "plunderers." "Would to God," he answered, "that I was misinformed; respect what I have accused you of violating and I will joyfully retract." But this was not what they intended. The churches of Gorcum had already been plundered, and some of the ban-

ners used for religious processions were to be seen floating at the mast-heads of the ships. They hung Theodore a few days later, in open defiance of the terms of capitulation.

The insults inflicted on the captives in the citadel may easily be imagined. The people came in crowds to the prison door to gaze upon them. "We have them at last," they cried. "These shaven pates, supporters of the papacy and Spanish despotism." The captives did not answer. Gaspard Turc, the Governor of the Citadel, was put into chains for venturing to call the terms of capitulation to Brant's mind, and not allowed to see his family again. A soldier, having found a paten among the holy vessels, threw it with all his might at the face of Father Nicolas, cutting his mouth, but the Father seemed hardly to notice it, rejoicing to suffer persecution for Christ's sake. Near him Nicaise and Willald, two Capuchin fathers, meditated as if in the peaceable silence of their monastery cells. Nicolas Poppel, the parish priest, was full of grief for the cowardice and apostasy of so many of his flock, while Father Leonard Wichel seemed not to realize the danger he

and his companions were in. So often in the course of his long ministry had he mercifully saved heretics from punishment, that it appeared impossible that he should receive anything but kindness from them in return. There was a certain Anabaptist whom he had snatched from death and reconciled to the Church, and to him he appealed. The man talked of his gratitude, but whether he dared not compromise himself, or whether his return to Catholicity had only been feigned, he hurried away, and the kind-hearted priest saw him no more.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER a day passed in alternate hope and fear, the names of the prisoners were read out, and all except the priests and religious were set at liberty; not, however, without having paid large ransoms. The priests and religious were then thrown into prison. One old secular priest, Godfrey van Duynen, had permission to depart, but when he got as far as the drawbridge one of the inhabitants asked the soldiers where they were taking him. "He is allowed to go because he is a fool," answered the soldiers. "Fool," said the citizen, "he has wits enough to make his God in the Mass, and enough head to be hung." The soldiers laughed, and the old man was led back to prison. A young nephew of Father Pik escaped and Father Pik could easily have escaped if he had wished to do so. One of his sisters had a son who was on good terms with the Gueux, among whom he had formerly served, for which he had been con-

demned to death by the Count of Bossut, the King of Spain's Commander at Rotterdam. Father Pik journeyed to that town, and obtained pardon. The young man had never forgotten it, and was very grateful to his uncle for having saved his life. He tried to persuade his uncle to leave the prison with him, but Father Pik firmly refused to be set free unless his Brothers in religion were liberated at the same time.

Many of the prisoners, who had eaten nothing for fully twenty-four hours, fainted from sheer weakness. It was Friday, and to mock at their religion the Protestant soldiers set meat before them for supper. We need not add that it was left untouched. The guard was composed of soldiers who had formerly been pirates. They laid their hands on all the provisions in the castle, and when filled with good cheer and wine their hatred for the sacred character of their prisoners knew no bounds. They rose from table furious with drink, and asked them where they would be cut first; on the nose, ears, hands, or feet? They had with them two ladders and ropes, which made the prisoners fear they were

about to be hung, when suddenly a sentinel entered, saying that the Governor's son, William Turc, who had been expected to relieve the citadel, had arrived, and that the Spaniards had already entered the town. The soldiers rushed to the walls, but it was a false alarm, and they soon returned to torture their prisoners. "All the better," they said; "we are going to amuse ourselves to-night with black and gray robes; it would really be a pity if the red coats should come to trouble us at so agreeable a pastime." "But," added one of them, "we must not work for nothing; let us make them come in turns to see the state of their purses." The parish priest, Leonard Wichel, was the first to be examined: he had still some money left and gave it to them at once. After him Godfrey van Duynen was called upon. "Show us your treasures," cried the soldiers. "I have none," answered the priest. "Possible!" said the soldiers; "you are half fool; it is not to you that treasures would be given, but rather to this old confessor of nuns," by which they meant Father Thierry Embden, director of the Sisters of St. Agnes. They ordered him to

show them the church treasures. They held a loaded pistol to his heart, but upon his earnest and reiterated declarations that he knew nothing of such treasures, they passed on to Father Nicolas Poppel, the younger of the parish priests of Gorcum. They thought the priests had carried immense riches into the citadel, the evening before; but when Father Nicolas Poppel denied having done so, their Protestant bigotry burst forth again. "At least," so they blasphemed, "give us the God which you made in the Mass. You who have so often railed against us in the pulpit, what do you think now, in the face of this pistol?" "I believe all which the Catholic Church believes and teaches," was his courageous answer, "and in particular I believe in the real presence of my God in the sacramental species. If that is any reason why I should die, kill me. I should be happy to die at the end of the confession of faith you desire from me," and he threw himself on his knees, crying out: "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." But his time had not yet come; God wished to add yet more to his merits by letting him pass through still great-

er trials. A soldier snatched the cord from one of the Capuchin's habit, and twisted it several times round Poppel's neck. They fastened one end of the cord to the prison door, and pulling the other, raised him violently from the ground and let him fall again several times, renewing each time their question about the treasures. Not being able to speak he answered by gestures, until at last they left him half dead. The cord had cut a deep wound around his neck, which remained distinctly visible until his death.

The Capuchin Fathers were the next to be examined. They answered that they had no riches, as the rule of St. Francis forbade them to possess anything as their own. "Bah!" said the soldiers; "tell that to others; you pretend to be poor in order that fools should give you money. Your convent must have a very fine money box, without counting the hoards which each of you in particular possess." And thinking that the young religious would be most likely to betray the supposed treasures, they began to ill-treat them in every possible way. One of them, overcome by pain, declared with tears in his eyes that he

knew nothing of any treasures, but that it was the Father Guardian who had care of the goods of the community. "And where is he, the guardian of these traitors?" they cried. At first they laid hands on Father Jerome de Werden, Vice Guardian, but the Guardian would not allow any one to wrest the crown of martyrdom from his brow, and declared his name and office.

They set at him at once, and beating him, tossed him backwards and forwards, one from another, like a ball, until their fury having spent itself, they required him to give up the convent treasures. Father Nicholas Pik calmly answered: "My treasures are the chalices and holy vessels of the Church, which I brought here; I know that you have already got them; would that they were sufficient for you, because I have no other." "And what has become of the money you got by begging, and the alms of the pious people?" "Nothing remains of those alms," said the Guardian. "You lie, you impudent monk." "I tell the truth," said the Father, "and as I have nothing more to add, ask me not to say anything else;" and neither blows nor promises could

induce him to say another word. Then they pulled his cord from his waist, and twisted it round his neck, just as they had done to Father Nicholas Poppel, but with still greater cruelty. They hung the holy martyr on the door, drew him up and let him down again, until the cord wore out, and his body fell and remained seemingly lifeless on the ground. The soldiers, astonished to see him dead so soon, raised his body and propped it against the wall. Then, whether to insult the body or to satisfy themselves that he was really dead, they applied burning torches to his mouth and ears, thrust them into his nostrils and mouth, and scorched his tongue and palate. Believing, at last, that he was dead, they kicked his burnt and bruised body, saying: "Who will demand an account from us?"—and went away, leaving the body for dead upon the ground. When the religious crowded around him, looking at his wounds, they were surprised to hear a sigh escape from his lips. They raised him, rubbed him, and washed his bleeding neck and burnt face. At last he spoke: "I hoped that my good Master would have received me into his bosom. But his holy will be done!"

The next morning the soldiers returned with a hatchet, intending to cut his body in pieces, according to the custom of the Low Countries with the bodies of traitors. Finding he had come to himself, "He does not want to die," they said. "This shaven pate! his soul is riven in his stomach; we know how to bring it out;" and they kicked him, beat him with their fists, rolled him upon the ground, taking care, however, not to endanger his life again.

Such was the kind of treatment to which all the holy martyrs were subjected for ten days. When one band of soldiers was satisfied with torturing them, another came; and when any citizens visited the citadel, they and the soldiers put their brains together to find some new torture. One of them forced the martyrs to puff out their cheeks as if they were blowing a horn, and then gave them furious blows on the cheeks, so that the blood spurted out of their mouths, noses, and ears. Only two religious, who were hidden in an embrasure of a loophole, escaped this inhuman amusement. Another visitor, a Frenchman, cut one of the Capuchins in the face with a

knife because he thought to appease his anger by speaking French to him.

At other times the soldiers amused themselves by kneeling before the most venerable priests, making mock confessions, whispering in their ears all kinds of nonsense and abominations. "What do you say to my confession?" asked one of them to Father Willald. "Will you give me absolution?" "Alas! no, my brother," answered the monk; "you are not sorry for your sins, but I will pray for you." "Pray for me, you proud monk!" and instead of being disarmed by such charity he dealt him a shower of blows. The good religious, at each blow which he received, contented himself with answering, "Deo Gratias," "Thanks be to God."

CHAPTER IV.

IT was during these ten days that the Dominican, Father John, was brought prisoner into the citadel. He belonged to the monastery of Cologne, in Germany, but had been appointed parish-priest of Hornaer, in Holland.

Many of his parishioners and religious were imprisoned by the Gueux; he visited them to administer the Sacraments, and was baptizing a child when he was taken prisoner. He was led to Gorcum and imprisoned with those who were suffering for their faith.

By this time the sad fate of those shut up in the citadel began to move the hearts of their fellow citizens. It was Brant's policy to tell as little as possible about them. He said they were well lodged, well fed, and treated well. Father Pik asked, through a friend who visited him, to have a surgeon to tend to the prisoners' wounds, but Brant pretended not to see what need there was of one. Yet he

dared not refuse. The surgeon, who was brother-in-law to Father Pik, when admitted, did all he could to persuade the Father to allow him to pay a ransom, but could not weaken the resolution he had taken that he would be liberated only on condition that all his fellow-sufferers would be allowed to go with him.

The surgeon's account of what he had seen, together with that of the schoolmaster, and some of the prisoners who were allowed their liberty, the influence of powerful friends, the large ransom which would be paid, the grief of the relations of several of the martyrs, all contributed to excite pity for them among the citizens. Petitions poured in from all sides. A large sum was subscribed for the release of Father Nicholas Poppel, but was appropriated by the man who had collected it.

Their case was mooted in the town council, and one senator had daring enough to call upon Brant to remember the terms on which the Governor had capitulated. Completely surprised, Brant threw the blame on his superiors, and said he was waiting for orders from them. All these things made the Gueux fear that their prey would escape,

and they resolved to hurry on the execution. They demanded instructions from the ferocious Count de la Marck, called the Count of Lumay; a man who had never been known to give quarter to any Catholic. He was at La Brille, where he was organizing a maritime insurrection. The Count answered by an order to send all detained in the citadel to him, and to be more sure of the rigid execution of his will, he charged an apostate priest, John Omal, formerly Canon Regular of the Cathedral of Liege, to conduct them to him. When that unhappy man arrived, Brant pretended not to dare to make any objection.

The holy martyrs were suddenly awakened in the middle of the night of the fifth of July, stripped almost naked, and taken on board a large ship. The night was cold. Willald, being an old man, and having no clothing but a thin shirt, asked in vain for his cassock or cloak to protect him from the cold. He received blows and injuries in response to his request; but afterwards some one took pity on his gray hairs and lent him a cloak. On boarding the ship Father Leonard Wichel recognized one of his parishioners

at the helm, and said to him: "Roche, is it you who are thus leading us to death?" The sailor, hanging down his head, answered, "Alas! Father, I am not master."

The old priest turned away, and standing on the deck as the ship slowly sailed down the Meuse, saw for the last time, through the tears which fell from his eyes, his beloved town of Gorcum, the scene of his pastoral labors, whose spiritual welfare had been the sole thought of his heart and life.

Leaving Gorcum at one o'clock, the vessel arrived at Dordrecht about nine in the morning. It was Sunday. The apostate priest could not pass the town without landing to exhibit his captives. The ship was moored to the quay, and the people were invited on board. The crowd being very great, the soldiers covered the deck with a large sail, making a tent of it, into which all who wished were admitted on payment of a small sum. We will not attempt to describe the insults which the martyrs had to undergo; like Saint Paul they became "a spectacle to men and angels."

The ship set sail again in the afternoon. The prisoners had not taken any food since

starting. A morsel of bread was given them in the evening. After another night in the open air they landed at the town of La Brille, on the morning of July the seventh. The Count de la Marck was in bed when he was told of their arrival. He immediately arose, mounted his horse, and hastened to the shore.

He ordered them to be landed, made them touch the ground with their heads, and kneel before him. Then, he said, "Arise!" and placed them in a line two a-breast, as if in solemn procession, and forced them to make the round of the gallows three times, walking backwards. An executioner, one of the Count's followers, set up a ladder against the gallows, as if he wished to hang them there and then. "This is the end of your pilgrimage," he cried out. "Sing, then, pious pilgrims! we are going to see you mount to heaven." But the Count did not wish to deprive his boon companions of the pleasure they would find in torturing inoffensive monks and priests, therefore, upon a signal from him, the procession was turned towards La Brille. The executioner went at the head, sacrilegiously holding a cross in his hands. Peter D'Assche

and Cornelius de Wyck, lay brothers of the Capuchin Order, walked first. Two soldiers rode on horseback at each side, carrying branches of trees, which they used as whips to scourge the holy martyrs. The Count shouted, "Sing! lecherous monks, sing! so that we may know whether you are afraid or not." The captives obeyed; and it was with strong and firm voices they chanted first the "Salve Regina," "Hail, Holy Queen," and afterwards several canticles in honor of the Blessed Virgin, Queen of Martyrs. They were singing the "Te Deum" when they entered La Brille. The whole town was on foot to receive them; but with what a reception! They advanced slowly between two compact walls of human beings. Yet, it was not a very amusing sight: Men, pale, haggard, nearly naked, already more or lest disfigured by the traces of brutal violence, one of them sixty years of age, another seventy, and a third almost eighty, were being led to death. The rabble pelted them with stones, threw dirty water in their faces, saying, "Asperges me Domine, etc." The women, usually so easily moved to pity, were worse than the men.

Father Jerome de Werden, who had travelled in the Holy Land and had undergone captivity among the infidels, declared that he had never met with such treatment even at the hands of Turks.

CHAPTER V.

THE martyrs were ordered to halt before a gibbet in the principal square of the town. The soldiers forced them to walk round it thrice, and afterwards to kneel and sing the Litany of the Saints. When they came to the end of the petitions, there was a dead silence. "Oremus! Oremus," cried the people. "Let some one sing the Oremus, because it will not be soon that we shall be able to hear it again in this country." Then Father Godfrey van Duynen, being the oldest priest, sang in a loud clear voice the prayers, which in the midst of dead silence could be heard all over the town; his fellow martyrs answered "Amen." At length they were led to prison, where they met some unexpected companions, two priests who had been there some time, and two others were brought in about an hour afterwards. They were the parish priests of Maesdam and Heinort, villages in the immediate neighborhood. And two re-

ligious of the Order of Premontrè, Adrian Becan and James Lacop, parish priest and curate of Munster, where they had been sent from the celebrated Abbey of Middlebourgh in Zealand. They had been taken prisoners the night before and led before the Count de la Marck in company with James Lacop's father. The Count asked the old man of what country he was. He replied in French that he was from Flanders. "Very good," said the Count. "If you persuade your son to give up his papism, both of you may go free." But the priest declared he would never accept life on such terms. "Then," said Lumay, "you will die." "I shall not die, but live," answered the priest. "What," said the Count, "do you not know that I have the power to put you to death?" "You may kill my body," said the priest, "but my soul is immortal; it will escape you." Angered by his boldness, the Count sent the two priests to prison, but gave the old man his liberty.

The prison of La Brille was formed of three rooms, one above the other, so arranged that the lowest, that in which the martyrs was imprisoned, was uninhabitable. No soil

pipes had been placed from the upper rooms, and all the refuse fell into the lower prison.

It was in total darkness. No one could be recognized except by his voice. The stench was insupportable. Some food was given them at three in the afternoon. They were taken to the Town Hall in the evening, and in presence of the Count interrogated on their faith. The firmness with which they answered did not draw down upon them any new outrage, except when one of the Count's soldiers, irritated by Father Leonard's responses, hit him with the back of a hatchet. "Strike again," said the priest. "Strike again ; I am in your power, but it will not be for long."

Another soldier threw a little hammer, which hit the priest on the forehead, and caused the blood to flow.

On their return to prison they were lodged in the higher room, which was neither so damp nor so unhealthy as that below.

Bread and water were given them for supper.

After this first conference on religion the Calvinists had formed the hope of staggering the faith of some of the prisoners, especially

of the parish priest of Maesdam, as well as Brother Henry, a young Capuchin, and one of the canons of Gorcum; and to carry out their evil designs, furnished them comfortable quarters for the night, in the house of the chief of the police. Unhappily, their designs succeeded.

The following day, proud of this first triumph, they essayed a more general victory. A young Capuchin, when examined, had answered that he believed exactly what the Father Guardian believed. The heretics thought that if they could seduce the older priests, all the others would follow. They therefore chose seven of those they thought the most learned among them, and caused them to appear before the town council in chains. Those they thus honored were the two Premonstratensians, the Guardian and the Vice Guardian of the Capuchins, the two parish priests of Gorcum, and Father Godfrey de Merville, a Capuchin. This new examination had been undertaken at the instigation of the two brothers-in-law of Father Nicholas Pik, who had come to La Brille to obtain his deliverance: they were more concerned for the

safety of his body than for his eternal salvation.

This conference was presided over by the Count, and directed by two ministers, assisted by a clerk, who took notes of all that happened. One of the ministers was an ex-sailor of Gorcum, called Corneille; an inveterate drinker. He knew no Latin, and when an answer embarrassed him, he turned to the magistrates and said, "Hang them! hang them! and all will be finished."

The other, who was more learned and very glib with Bible quotations, was called Andrew. He was formerly the Catholic parish priest of St. Catherine in La Brille. Seeing the Gueux masters of his parish he changed politics and religion at one and the same time.

They began by asking the confessors if they believed in the authority of the Roman Pontiff, and why they did so. Father Leonard Wichel answered that he considered it the very foundation of Christian Unity; and added that he could not understand how a Protestant could find fault with any one believing it, because the fundamental idea of Protestantism is that each one has a right to

find in his Bible that which the Holy Ghost inspires him to find there; but if the Holy Ghost inspires one to find the Primacy of the Saint Peter and his successors in the Bible, by what right could any consistent and honest Protestant find fault with him for doing so? Would they refuse a Catholic a right which according to Protestant principles belongs to all? This was hitting the nail on the head. A veritable bomb-shell in the Protestant camp. How could they answer? If they denied a Catholic this right they could be no longer consistent Protestants. If they allowed it, Catholic doctrines would be equally true with their own, a manifest absurdity. So one of them did what all Protestants do when pinned to the wall by some unanswerable Catholic argument:—he turned the question aside, and said, "Since you appear disposed to reason according to the Holy Scripture, let us argue according to the Bible."

The discussion was accepted; it did no honor to the Protestants, and ended abruptly by the forcible expulsion of the Catholic theologians from the hall. But before sending them away the Count wished to speak to

James Lacop, the Premonstratensian, whose mild countenance and graceful elocution had made a strong impression upon his ferocious heart. To seduce him he first made flattering promises, and then used menaces; but without shaking his constancy and belief in the Catholic faith. In the meantime a messenger was announced, bearing letters to the Count from Marin Brant, the town council of Gorcum, and the Prince of Orange. Marin Brant's letter was a simple passport, written by his own hand, in which he assumed the title of Lord, which raised the Count's anger. The Council of Gorcum, in its letter, reminded the Count of the promise made to all the prisoners when they capitulated, that their lives should not be touched; they bore witness to the good reputation of all the prisoners, certifying that they had never done anything but good to their fellow-citizens, and ended by interceding in their behalf. The messenger was also charged to say that they were disposed to give a ransom for them, and that Father Wichel's sister would herself pay a large sum for his release. The letter of the Prince of Orange was more decisive; he had

written at the request of the town council of Gorcum. But unhappily it had just the contrary effect of what he intended. The Count was very indignant when he read it. He said that William of Orange was marvellously mistaken if he supposed that the Count de la Marck had shaken off the yoke of the King of Spain for the pleasure of bending his head to an equal. He renewed his oath to kill all priests who fell into his hands, as a revenge for the death of the Counts of Hoorne and Egmont.

CHAPTER VI.

FATHER Nicolas Pik's two brothers, who had also come to La Brille, obtained by perseverance the permission to liberate him, with no obligation on his part of renouncing the faith. To their great astonishment he refused, and begged them not to speak to him again of abandoning his spiritual children. They obtained a promise from the Calvinist ministers and the principal Gueux that all should be set at liberty, if they would only renounce the Pope, having full liberty to believe all the other doctrines of the Catholic faith. They were also authorized to invite their brother to sup with them in town that evening. He accepted their invitation, but steadily resisted all their loving persuasions. Their affection touched his tender heart; he thanked them, but resolutely declined all they proposed. They then betook themselves to arguments, in which they were soon silenced. Then they pretended to lay aside all discussions for the

moment, and appeared to think of nothing but eating and drinking, in the hope that good cheer would soften his constancy. Father Nicolas, enfeebled by long fasting, did not refuse to join them in innocent pleasure. There was nothing sad about him; no one would have thought he had undergone so much suffering, or that he was in imminent danger of death; but as soon as his brothers returned to their arguments he begged them once and for all to cease: "Think you that by the cowardice you recommend to me I would be saved. No! I should die a few years later on; in six, or ten, or perhaps even in thirty years, only to fall into hell. Let me rather go to heaven at once. Death does not frighten me." Then they began to reproach him, but Father Nicolas, to show them how utterly useless it was, stretched himself out on a bench, and soon fell into a deep sleep.

His brothers looked at him in silence, fearing to disturb his slumbers. In their hearts they could not but feel proud of him, so courageous, so firm in the faith, so ready to die.

The Count had abandoned himself that

night to his usual excesses. Full of wine he read the letter of the Prince of Orange again, and noticed that Marin Brant had only sent him a copy, keeping the original. This want of respect put the finishing stroke to his fury. "He also," he cried, "thinks himself superior to me. He! Marin Brant! who only yesterday handled the pick and the shovel instead of the sword. Every one pretends to command me, and those who do not dare to send me their orders send them by others. By all the devils of the Antichrist of Rome we shall see!"

He rose from table, called the executioner, and ordered the prisoners to be hanged. Then speaking to the apostate priest, John Omal, he charged him to see that his orders were strictly carried out. "You may trust me," Omal answered. Father Nicolas was awakened, and taken to the other martyrs, who were tied together by their arms, in ten couples. Soldiers surrounded them, some on foot, others on horseback, and a crowd of people had assembled, although it was in the middle of the night.

It was the month of July, 1572. At one

o'clock in the morning they were taken out of prison and led to the monastery of St. Elizabeth, at Ruggennse. It had been inhabited not long before by the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine, but had been ransacked and half destroyed by the Gueux. There was a large granary in the basement, which was to be the place of their martyrdom. A stout beam ran from one wall to the other, and another projected part of the distance across, and upon these two beams they were to be hanged.

They were stripped of all their clothes, which caused them much shame, until they remembered that their Divine Lord and Master had hung naked on the cross, and rejoiced to resemble him so closely. The Father Guardian mounted the ladder first, after having embraced his companions. "I show you," he said, "the ladder to heaven. Follow me like valiant soldiers of Jesus Christ, that having fought together, none may be wanting at the eternal triumph which awaits us on high," and he ceased not to exhort them to courage until his breath failed.

He was in the thirty-eighth year of his age.

As soon as he was dead, Father Jerome de Werden, the Vice-Guardian, Nicaise Johnson, and the two parish priests of Gorcum, Leonard Wichel and Nicolas Poppel, offered to take his place. And indeed their encouragement was sorely needed. There was a Calvinist minister present, who did his best to seduce the laymen and young religious, offering them life and worldly advantages if they would give up their faith. Nicaise Johnson, who knew how simple they were, and that many of them were incapable of answering his heretical sophisms, told them to avoid discussion and simply to profess their faith. "You lose your time," he said to the minister; "they will not listen to you; we are all Catholics, even unto death."

Father Jerome de Werden was the second to be hanged. He went up the steps of the ladder, invoking the Holy Virgin and Saints. The minister put himself right before him on the other side of the ladder, and reproached him for his pretended idolatry. Father Jerome, to show his indignation at his blasphemies, and his utter contempt for the wretch, kicked him on the stomach through

the rounds of the ladder, which knocked him backwards.

One of the Capuchins, a novice called Henry, the youngest of the number, inspired by the hope of softening the executioner's heart, made a sign that he accepted the minister's conditions. He was at once unbound and taken aside. "Oh! misfortune, worse than all tortures," cried Father Jerome from the ladder. "Minister of Satan, you will have to answer before God for this youth's loss."

The Gueux stopped his mouth with their pikes. Then, as the unhappy youth, to whom God afterwards gave the grace of conversion, related, the soldiers saw a cross on Father Jerome's breast and right arm, which he had tattooed during his journey to the Holy Land, and they set to work to efface it with the points of their swords. The courageous priest, hanging on the beam, prayed unceasingly, and encouraged his brothers as long as his failing breath allowed him. So also did Nicaise Johnson, and Nicolas Poppel, who died next. After them came a Capuchin called William, who just as he was about to

give his life for God, cried out in French that he wished to live, that he renounced the Pope, and begged the soldiers to save him. They cut him down, gave him a soldier's tunic and casquet, and let him go.

The miserable coward came to a bad end. Enrolled among the soldiers of the Gueux, abandoned by God, he quickly fell into all kinds of excesses, and was hanged only two months afterwards, not for a holy cause, but for a crime of theft.

There were also a few among the young brothers, who, frightened at death, implored the pity of the executioner; but as they would not renounce their faith were not liberated.

Godfrey Merville, before dying, repeated the words of Jesus Christ on the cross. "Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do." Leonard Wichel, mounting the ladder, said the only thing which caused him grief was the thought of his aged mother; but Godfrey van Duynen cried out to him, "Courage Master Leonard! to-day we shall be companions in heaven at the feast of the Lamb." He was the last to be hanged, when

the soldiers hesitated to take the ladder away from under his feet, saying: "Let us, at least, spare this one, he is innocent." "No! no!" he said; "send me to my brothers; I see the heavens opened. If I have offended or scandalized any one, I ask his pardon."

CHAPTER VII.

THE agony of the victims was long and painful. The soldiers acquitted themselves of their task with great cruelty. One martyr was hanged by his chin, the rope passed through another's mouth, and a third was strangled with difficulty, the rope being so loosely fastened.

Father Nicasse Johnson did not die until after the sun had risen next morning.

The soldiers treated the bodies with shameful barbarity. They spent from two to four o'clock in insulting and mutilating them, "Monks! monks!" they cried. "Hams of parish priests; these are dainty morsels, which one does not get every day." And they cut a nose from one, and an ear or a foot from another. They put them in their casquets for cockades, or hung them on their pikes, and went to promenade in the town, throwing those saintly relics in the faces of Catholics. Some, believing that the fat of dead criminals

was a remedy against certain maladies, opened and searched the entrails to find it. They hung the body of Father Jerome de Werden on a ladder, cut it up like butcher's meat, and sold the fat they found to dealers in salves. The entrails, labelled, were publicly sold in the Gorcum market. The granary was filled the whole day with crowds of people, the soldiers exacting an entrance fee.

In the evening a Catholic from Gorcum paid a large sum to be allowed to bury the remains of the holy bodies;—but going early next morning he found that the magistrates, ashamed, no doubt, of such disgraceful barbarities, had ordered the soldiers to bury them. They had dug two ditches, of unequal length, in which they had heaped up the bodies of the fifteen martyrs, who had been hanged on the long beam, and the other four they buried in a separate grave.

The Gorcum Martyrs were beatified by Pope Clement 10th, at Rome, November 24th, 1675. Two centuries later Pius IX. declared them canonized, June 29, 1867.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century a little sweet-smelling white flower sprang up

from the ground which had been watered with the blood of the Martyrs at La Brille. It grew rapidly, and was of so unusual a form, that it could not be classed with any known species of flower, as was attested by the most learned botanists of Holland. Hearing of this marvellous event, thousands flocked to the tomb of the martyrs, to gaze upon this rare testimony of their sanctity. For a long time there was a continual succession of pilgrims, and all of them took a sprig of the plant away; yet it never seemed to grow less. Among the pilgrims was Adrien Antony, parish priest of St. Gertrude of Utrecht, who took a little branch away with him. He put it in a small box, and looked at the flowers from time to time, always finding them as fresh as if only just gathered. Once he allowed eight or nine months to pass without looking at them, and what was his astonishment, when he opened the box in the presence of several friends, to find them multiplied, and when he counted them they were found to be nineteen, the exact number of the martyrs. This miracle was duly proved at the time it happened.

There were in all eleven Capuchins, two Premonstratensians, one Dominican, one Regular Canon of Saint Augustine, and four secular priests. Their names were St. Nicolas Pik, Guardian; St. Jerome de Werder, Vice Guardian; St. Thierry Embden, St. Nicaise Johnson, St. Willald, St. Godfrey of Merville, St. Antony of Werden, St. Antony of Hornaer, St. Francis of Roze, all Capuchin priests; St. Peter of Assche, St. Cornelius of Wyck, Capuchin lay brothers; St. Leonard Wichel, St. Nicolas Poppel, St. Andrew Walter, and St. Godfrey van Duynen, secular priests; St. John of Oosterwyck, Canon Regular of St. Augustine; St. Andrian Becan, and St. James Lacop, Premonstratensians, and St. John of Cologne, Dominican. God's justice overtook the Count de la Marck. When the war was over he retired into the country near Liege, where he was bitten by one of his own dogs and died a miserable death, raving mad.

Prayer.

Ant. In the might of Thine arm! scattering the proud, O Lord! Thou hast regarded the humility of Thy servants: and be-

hold! all generations call them Blessed.

V. Pray for us, Blessed John and thy companions,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God! Who didst crown with the laurel of immortality the glorious strife for the faith of Thy blessed Martyrs, John and his companions, mercifully grant that, fighting here on earth, we may likewise deserve, through their merits, and after their example, to be crowned with them in heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSED PETER GONZALEZ.

BLESSED PETER GONZALEZ.

April 14th.

BLESSED Peter Gonzalez was born in the year 1190, at Astorga, in Spain. His parents, who were rich and noble, gave him an education suited to his rank. Although they intended him, from his youth, for the service of God, they do not seem to have taken any pains to instil into his mind piety, or a right idea of the excellence and responsibility of the ecclesiastical state to which they destined him. When he had come to a sufficient age, they confided his education to the care of his uncle, the Bishop of Astorga, to whom they looked for preferment for their son. Blessed Peter was naturally gifted with great abilities, and profited much by the lessons of the masters who had charge of his education, and being a handsome youth, of very winning manners and easy address, soon gained his uncle's heart. When he had finished his stud-

ies the Bishop appointed him Canon, and soon afterwards obtained him the Deanery of the Cathedral.

Peter gladly accepted these offices, looking upon them, however, merely as a means of increasing his already ample income. He chose the feast of Christmas to take formal possession of the Deanery, and mounted on a superb Spanish genet, dressed in rich but unclerical garments, set out for the Cathedral, attended by a numerous suite of attendants, just at the time when the streets were crowded with people on their way to hear Mass. All turned to look upon the gay and thoughtless youth, who had embraced the ecclesiastical state only to lead a life of self-indulgence Many, no doubt, were scandalized, and contrasted him with the true servants of God: but God in his mercy and wonderful wisdom chose this occasion for his conversion, and on that day, when all pious souls were contemplating the child Jesus newly born upon earth, caused Peter to be born again to a new life of grace. As he rode through the crowded streets he spurred his horse, making it prance from side to side, to attract admiration, when suddenly

he was thrown to the ground, falling upon a heap of dirt, which had been scraped up on the side of the street. The gay Spaniards, who had admired the horse and its rider but a few minutes before, now laughed heartily at his mishap. Terribly mortified, he rose quickly; but he was in a horrible plight, his face and hands covered with mud, his fine clothes completely spoiled; he knew not how to conceal his shame. Peals of laughter greeted him anew, till full of chagrin, he cried out, "Since the world laughs at me, henceforth I will laugh at the world;" and he kept his resolution. The grace of God had entered into his heart; and in that short moment of bitter mortification he was converted to a new and holy life. He saw the vanity of earthly delights, and turned himself with all his heart to God.

He spent some time after his conversion in retirement and prayer, in order to know the will of God, and to beg the divine help in his choice of a state of life. He was inspired with a great horror of sin; and a saving fear of the judgment of God, joined to a sweet confidence in his blessed mercy, took possession of his soul. He felt a burning desire to wipe

away his sins by giving himself to his Creator with all his heart, and whilst leading a life of penance and prayer, to turn the talents God had given him to the service of his fellow men. In a word, Peter felt all the desires of a truly noble and generous soul, not only to love and serve God, but to lead others also to love and serve Him.

The Order of Friar Preachers, founded by Saint Dominic, his fellow-countryman, offered him all he sought. He, therefore, went to the monastery at Palencia, recently built, the home of many holy men. There he received the habit, and began a life of penance, prayer, and apostolic labors. He seems to have been about the age of thirty, when he entered the Dominican Order.

The year of his novitiate was a year of tears, shed for the sins of his youth, the memory of which was never absent from his mind; but the wonderful mercy God had shown him in his conversion was an earnest of the happiness of heaven he was so eagerly striving to attain. When he thought of the danger he had run of losing his soul he trembled—but the sweet memory of his conver-

sion always re-assured him. He was one of the most fervent novices; one of the most mortified; was most edifying in conversation, and, above all, was distinguished for his exact observance of the rule; very prayerful and devout, more especially to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to the most holy Sacrament of the altar. He also became remarkable for his love of holy purity, the fruitful parent of all Christian virtues.

He had turned his back upon the world and its delights, but the world was not content to lose him. Some of his friends, who pretended to be full of zeal for his welfare, went to see him and talked to him in this strain: "You have taken a very serious step, and, as it seems to us, with but scant reflection, whereas it is a step which requires years of thought and prayer." Others said: "You have been brought up in luxury, and probably will not be able to observe the long fasts and observances of the rule you have embraced. Would it not have been better to have begun your penance more moderately?" Many suggested that he had thrown away the talent God had given him; that

he would have been very useful among the secular priests of the diocese, on account of his rank, but that in the Dominican cloister his life would be hidden and of no particular use to any one; that as Dean of the Cathedral perhaps God had destined him for a great work; and in fine, all the usual arguments pious but imperfect souls borrow from the maxims of the world when they see any one trying to lead a more perfect life than themselves. But the novice, happy in his life of penance and prayer, saw through all these specious arguments, and happily persevered in the course he had begun.

As soon as he had taken his solemn vows he studied theology and the holy Scriptures, and in due time began to preach. As a preacher, he was gifted with a special power of moving souls. Immediately after his sermon he was obliged to go into the confessional, and, although night found him still there, the penitents were not yet all confessed, and other confessors would be obliged to go to his aid. He went from town to town, village to village, preaching to all, rich and poor alike, and wherever he preached a complete

change of morals took place. Never were there so many conversions, never such restitution of ill-gotten gains, seldom so many quarrels ended, and enmities happily terminated.

He was truly a son of the apostolic Dominic, full of ardent zeal. He could always win the affections and confidence of the most hardened sinner, and it is said he never entered any house without hearing the confession of those of its inmates who had wandered away from God.

His success with souls was not the effect of natural gifts, but the fruit of holiness. Each night he passed in prayer and penance, offering himself to God for the conversion of sinners; and although endowed with great natural eloquence, he by no means neglected the study of the art of preaching. To the irksome duties of the confessional he devoted himself with rare self-forgetfulness, and when called went at once. He would often say to the Fathers: "Let us go, dear Brothers, to gather up the precious blood of Christ, which has been shed for poor sinners." When hearing confessions he never scolded the penitent, nor showed any surprise, even when the sins

were very grievous, but listened with such gentleness that the poor sinner imagined he was pouring out his sins and sorrows into the ear of him who was so pitiful to the Magdalen kneeling in sorrow at his sacred feet. Thus he gained souls for his divine Master, and extended the reign of God in the hearts of men. Can we think that he forgot the sins of his own youth and his wonderful conversion when he heard the confessions of poor sinners?

Ferdinand the Third, King of Spain, who was afterwards canonized, wished to have Blessed Peter for his confessor and director, and kept him at court for this purpose. The saint accompanied him and his army in the wars against the Moors, who were in possession of the greater part of Spain at that time. Being thus brought into intimate connection with the young dissolute nobles of the court and the soldiers of the army, he set to work at once to reform them by leading the king to a very perfect rule of life, so that while the king made laws for his subjects to repress vice, he himself should set a good example.

In a short time a great change could be seen

in the morals and lives of the grandees of the court, who had hitherto been noted for their licentiousness. He was continually with the brave soldiers, in the camp, on the march, even in the battle-field; and no one can imagine, says one ancient author, the courage with which they fought, knowing that, having confessed to the saint before the battle, they were in a state of grace. He was also always consulted by the captains before any great engagement, and his advice was followed with the most favorable results.

In the court he lived the same life of penance, humility, and retirement as when he was in the cloister, but the evangelical freedom with which he attacked the vices of the gay young nobles gained him many enemies. It could not be otherwise; no fearless denouncer of sin can escape giving offence. So it was with Blessed Peter: for although his preaching and holy example drew many hearts to God, yet there were some who, not wishing to change their evil lives, determined to silence him, by attempting to draw him into the same degrading sins which had enslaved themselves.

One day, as some of these young gallants were talking together how they could draw the servant of God into sin, an infamous woman, possessed of many earthly charms, hearing their conversation, offered herself to tempt him, for she too had suffered from his denunciations. They accepted her offer, and went to be eye-witnesses of the saint's fall; for in their blindness they could not imagine how he could resist when brought into intimate contact with temptation.

Towards dusk the miserable creature went to the Dominican monastery, and asked to see Father Peter in private. When she was admitted into his presence she fell on her knees weeping, and begged him to hear her confession; but as it was so late in the evening the saint prudently asked her to come again the next day.

"Holy Father," cunningly answered this daughter of Eve, "the fame of your virtues has spread abroad, and I know that you are full of zeal for the salvation of souls, therefore I have dared to come to you. I beseech you to come to my aid at once in my urgent need. I protest in God's sight that unless you hear

my confession this night you will have to render an account to him of my eternal loss." Thus solemnly called upon, and fearing no evil, Blessed Peter prepared to hear her confession; when suddenly she said: "Dear Father Peter! I am ashamed to make known to you the fatal wound from which I suffer, and which tortures me beyond all expression. But know that I suffer a most ardent desire to enjoy your love, and tell you for certain that unless you consent I must die."

The saint heard these shameful words with horror; but illumined by a divine inspiration, did not spurn her at once. He said to her: "My daughter, God will never allow me to be the cause of your death. Do not be sad, for you shall soon be freed from all danger. Yet wait awhile until I can find a suitable place." Then going into the next cell—the delighted libertines still on the watch, although the saint knew it not—he laid a pile of wood faggots on the ground, and set fire to them; then calling to the miserable woman he threw himself into the flames: "Come," he said to her, "and in this fiery bed I will satisfy your desires."

Now, although he lay thus among the flames, he was not burnt, and converted by the sight of this wonderful miracle, the young libertines rushed in, and falling on their knees, begged his pardon. The tempter was also converted, and became a true penitent, "a vessel," says the old writer, "of perfect purity."

The army of King Ferdinand captured the city of Cordova, the capital of the Moorish kingdom in Spain, in the year 1236. Blessed Peter entered the city with the conquerors. It was a great victory for the Christians, for Cordova had been under Mahometan rule for five hundred years. The magnificent mosque was at once restored to the service of the true God, and the bells, which the Moors had brought from the famous shrine of Saint James at Compostella, three centuries before, were returned to it. When Compostella fell a prey to the Moorish conquerors, they had forced Christians to carry them to Cordova upon their shoulders, and now King Ferdinand ordered the captive Moors to take them back in the same way.

Blessed Peter's zeal found a wide field in

the captured city. He restrained the ardor of the soldiers, saved the honor of many virgins, and the lives of numberless children. He purified the Mahometan mosques, and changed them into churches, preached the pure doctrine of Christ to the Moorish prisoners, and delivered from their chains a number of Christians found in the prisons.

But all the favors that King Ferdinand and his nobles continually showered upon him could not spoil him. Although held in the highest esteem, and in a position less perfect men would have envied, he hesitated not to leave all these honors when he thought the glory of God called him elsewhere. Learning that there was great need of apostolic preachers in the provinces of Galicia and the Asturias, he left the court to go to preach there.

Mariana, a well-known Spanish historian, thus speaks of him: "About the same time there flourished an illustrious man called Peter Gonzalez, who, after having left the Court, where he held several offices, consecrated the rest of his days to instructing the poor country peasants of Galicia and the

Asturias. He became a celebrated preacher, and by means of missions, which he preached in all the towns and villages, banished ignorance and libertinism from those provinces."

But before beginning his missions he retired for some time to the monastery of Guimaraens in Galicia, to restore his spiritual strength, which he feared so many public employments had weakened. While there he seems to have been elected Prior, but his ardent zeal for the salvation of souls soon drew him forth from his retreat.

He traversed the mountainous districts of the Asturias, preaching everywhere, never leaving any town or village without having converted many sinners, putting an end to long standing quarrels, and banishing all kinds of scandals. From this time until his death his life was one continual mission. Wherever he went he was received by the people as an angel from heaven, and multitudes followed him from place to place, so as to be always near him. He was especially successful at Compostella and Tuy, where he worked many miracles. The first miracle was at Tuy. News was brought that a

priest, one of his friends, was seriously sick at Bayonne, a Spanish seaport, and although it was noon, and he had not yet dined, he set out at once to walk to Bayonne, a distance of nine miles. He left a message for his companion, a young father, to follow him as quickly as possible. The Father also set out without dining, acting upon a spirit of ready obedience. But the devil, who does not like obedience, filled this young Father's mind with criticizing thoughts against his superior, and he shortly began to complain that the saint had little compassion for the wants of others. He soon felt tired, and when he came to the base of a hill, called Bortella de Angella, said to a secular person who was with him: "This good Father is so used to go from place to place fasting, that he does not think of us at all; he measures all by his own ell, and seems to imagine young men, such as we, can go whole days without eating and yet make journeys of nine miles just at dinner time." Now, while he was talking, God made known his thoughts to the saint, who was not far in advance. He turned towards them, and when they came near said: "Go, my chil-

dren, to that rock which you see, and you will find something there for your dinner." They went and found two beautiful white loaves, wrapped up in a napkin, and a bottle of wine. Astonished at the sight they ran to the saint, carrying with them what they had found. He blessed the food and told them to eat what they needed, and leave the rest, which they did, and again followed the saint, who walked on in front, occupied in sweet discourse with God. They had not gone far when curiosity prompted them to return to see what had become of what they had left, but they found it had gone. Then the saint turned once more and said to them laughing: "What made you return? He who put the food there for you has taken away what you left." And thus they knew it was God who had sent them food at the intercession of Blessed Peter.

Arrived at Bayonne, he visited his sick friend, and preached the next day in the church with such effect that he was obliged to remain in that town more than a year, preaching every day. The peasants came from the mountain sides in crowds, and were

so charmed with his sermons and conversation, that they were loath to return to their homes. Three times a day he preached or catechised, and the confessional claimed nearly the rest of his time. Sometimes his hearers were so many that no church was large enough to hold them, and then the saint preached in the open air. On one occasion he was preaching to a very large crowd, near the walls of the town, when a fearful storm set in. The thunder rolled, the lightning flashed, and the rain threatened to disperse his audience. Every one thought of flight, but the holy preacher quickly calmed their fears, and prayed to God to protect them from the fury of the elements. His prayer was heard, and while torrents of rain flooded the country around, the place where he preached was quite dry, and he was able to continue his sermon without any discomfort, either to himself or his hearers.

Travelling one day near Compostella, he became very tired and thirsty on account of the great heat, so that he was obliged to go to the house of a parish priest to beg something to drink. The good priest was not at

home; he found only a maid servant, who said: "I have a glass of wine at the bottom of a bottle, but my master especially told me to keep it for him on his return, so that I cannot give it to you." "Go," said the Father, "bring what you have, and God will give enough for me and for your master too." She went at once, trusting to his words, and found that the wine had been miraculously increased in the bottle. But the miracle did not end there, for when the priest came home and called for the wine the bottle was found quite full, although Blessed Peter had taken all he needed. The priest remembered how little wine he had left in the bottle and asked the servant how it came to pass that it was now quite full. "I believe," she answered, "that the wine is not of this world," and explained the whole circumstance to her master. "Has the good Father Peter been long gone?" "No," she answered; "if you follow him at once, and walk fast you will soon overtake him." He set out to follow the Father, and when he had overtaken him, begged him to go back with him to his house, but he thanked him, recommended him to

tell his servant, in future, to give what she had to the poor, and to trust to God's providence to provide for the priest's needs.

When Blessed Peter was Prior of Guimaraens, he undertook a noble work, which has made his name famous in Spain. This was to build a bridge over the river Minho, at its junction with the Arnoya near Rivadavia. The passage of the Minho at this point was exceedingly dangerous, and many lives had been lost in attempts to cross it. He determined to build a bridge. He went to the king and to several rich noblemen to ask them to help him in his work. They at once gave him a considerable sum of money, but on account of the great depth of the water, and the length of the bridge, what he received was not nearly sufficient. The inhabitants of the neighborhood contributed generously according to their means; one gave stone, another his time, and those who could, gave money. He worked hard with the builders, carried stone upon his own shoulders, mixed the cement and contributed more than any to its success. At times he left the workmen, and went with his companion, Father Peter de

Marigny, to collect for the building of the bridge, and he spoke with such effect that he always got as much as he needed.

He also worked miracles to help on the good work. When the workmen's provisions came to an end, and he had no money to purchase a new supply, he used to go down to the banks of the river, and making the sign of the cross over the waters, called the fishes. In a moment a number of them were seen swimming towards him to be caught, and when he had taken all he needed, he blessed the rest. They then swam away. This beautiful miracle, which often took place, called forth from the Father ardent praises of the good God. "Is it possible," he would add, "that these poor creatures, who lack the use of reason, can be so prompt in obeying the word of a creature like myself, and that I, gifted with a rational soul, should be so deaf to the voice of my Creator?"

In due time the bridge was finished, and to this day remains a monument, not only of his charity, but also of his architectural science and taste; for it is declared to be one of the noblest in Spain.

Having preached in nearly all the principal provinces of Spain, Blessed Peter turned his attention to the work of evangelizing the sailors, who thronged the seaport towns. He was very successful, but it was his last work.

Having reached the age of fifty-six, he went to preach, on Palm Sunday, 1246, in the monastery church of the Benedictine nuns at Pesiguero, and during his sermon said: "I have two things to make known to you, my friends, which God has revealed to me. The first is that Jesus Christ, my Master, has told me that it is not prudent to allow so many people to follow me about, because several of them being weak, too young, or too old, cannot bear the fatigue of the journey; therefore, in the name of my Saviour, I wish those who are here to follow me henceforth no longer. The second is that I shall not be among you much more, and shall never return here. Pray for me, then, for although, by the grace of God, my heart accuses me of nothing since I gave up the world, yet I do not think I am so sinless as not to need the prayers of the faithful." When he had finished his sermon all the people wept loudly, hearing that he

was about to die. He took leave of them one by one, and then said farewell to the nuns. On the same day he returned to Tuy for holy week.

He preached every day during the week, with such energy that his hearers cried out: "Never did any man speak like this."

But he was taken sick, and knowing that his death was now at hand, set out for Compostella, that he might die among his brothers of the Order; but coming to a little village, called Santa Columba, his weakness increased so rapidly that he saw it was useless to continue his journey, and returned on foot to Tuy. He died there, at a friend's house, on Easter Sunday, April 15th, 1240, having received the last sacraments.

There being no Dominican monastery in Tuy, he was buried in the Cathedral, between the choir and the principal entrance. The Bishop erected a magnificent tomb over his remains, and when he himself died was buried by the holy man's side. A miraculous oil issued from Blessed Peter's tomb, and being collected in phials, worked miracles.

His cultus was approved by Innocent the

4th, who in a bull, issued in the year 1254, allowed the Dominican Fathers of Spain to celebrate his feast every year with an office as solemn as if he had been canonized by the Holy See. In Tuy the feast was kept on the Wednesday after Low Sunday.

The miracles worked at the tomb were so numerous, says Blessed Humbert de Romanis, that the Bishop of Tuy juridically verified no less than 180 in the first twelve years after the saint's death, and having signed the Documents, and stamped them with his episcopal seal, sent them to the Fathers of the General Chapter of the Dominican Order, held at Toulouse, in the year 1258. In this list were five lepers, nine cases of diabolical possession, and many deaf and dumb who were miraculously cured by his intercession; and it is worthy of note that it included several miraculous preservations from shipwreck and drowning. The Fathers of the Chapter, on receipt of the Bishop's Documents, at once petitioned the Holy See to proceed to his solemn canonization. This request has often been renewed. Thus, in the year 1592, Michael de Castro, Archbishop of Lisbon, wrote to Pope

Clement the 8th, to ask the canonization of this servant of God, and in 1608 the Archbishop of Braga and his clergy, seconded by King Philip 3d, asked the same boon. At last, in the year 1741, Benedict the 14th again approved of his cultus, extended it to all the Dominican Provinces, and fixed his feast for the 14th of April.

His relics have been translated several times. In 1529, when the Bishop of Tuy solemnly deposited them in a magnificent silver shrine, in a chapel near the north door of the Cathedral. In 1567 the chapel was enlarged and beautified, and the coffer in which the relics repose was raised much higher, so that it could be more easily seen.

Blessed Peter is invoked by the Spanish sailors under the name of St. Elmo, or Telmo, which is supposed to be a corruption of Erasmo. Saint Erasmo was the favorite patron of mariners until the time of Blessed Peter, when the sailors took him for their patron, but retained the old name. A hymn is sung in his honor, which runs as follows:

"Senor San Pedro Gonzalez
De Navegantes piloto;

Libra nos de terremoto,
Y defende nos de malos."

"Let us have recourse," says a pious old author, who wrote the life of our saint, "to his protection, when we voyage on this stormy sea of the world, that he may be favorable to us in the tempest which so often overtakes us, so that we may arrive at the safe port of that happy eternity which he enjoys forever."

Ant. O Blessed Peter, glorious confessor of our Lord, strengthen this people by thy holy intercession, that we who are oppressed with the weight of our sins may be relieved through the glory of thy blessedness, and under thy guidance gain everlasting rewards.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed Peter,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God, who dost afford singular help, through Blessed Peter, to such as are in the dangers of the sea, grant through his inter-

cession that in all the storms of this life the light of Thy grace may ever shine upon us whereby we may be able to gain the port of eternal salvation. Amen.

BLESSED AUGUSTINE OF NOCERA.

BLESSED AUGUSTINE OF NOCERA.

August 8th.

THIS holy Bishop was born at Trau, a small seaport in Dalmatia, on the shores of the Adriatic. Dalmatia was dependent on the kingdom of Hungary at the time when Blessed Augustine came into this world.

His father, Nicolas de Caczioth, was one of the most honorable and influential men of the town, and much respected for his virtuous life. His mother, Droslawa, was a daughter of the ancient house of the Drascovics, of Sign, a town near Trau. She was no less pious than her husband. They were blessed by God with a numerous family.

The exact date of Augustine's birth has not been recorded, but is supposed to have been about the year 1259. All the ancient lives state that he was born in the same year that Bela, King of Hungary, took refuge in

Trau, from the fury of the Tartars. Those fearful scourges of Christianity ravaged Hungary twice in the thirteenth century, in 1241, and again in 1259, and it was during this second invasion that it is supposed Augustine was born, for he was still young when he entered the Dominican Order in 1277 or 1278.

The contagion of the world had not tarnished the brightness of his innocence, when he asked to be admitted as a novice about the age of eighteen. He gave great satisfaction in the novitiate, and after his profession began his studies, in which he advanced so rapidly that his superiors sent him to Bologna in Italy, and afterwards to Paris to study.

He set out for France, in the year 1286, on foot, according to the general custom of those days. He was accompanied by a young novice, Jacopo Orsini, nephew to the Cardinal of the same name. Jacopo was no less distinguished for his rare virtues than for his high rank. The students had not been many days on the road when they were attacked by two hired ruffians, who threw themselves upon them, and speedily killed Jacopo. They were the emissaries of the Counts of Casana-

tense, the deadly enemies of the Orsini. Blessed Augustine was wounded, and left for dead in the snow, for it was in the middle of winter. Happily, a gentleman of the neighborhood, Augustine Pagan de Petra, a staunch friend of the Dominican Fathers, happened to pass that way, and found the two novices lying upon the snow, to all appearances dead. He took them to his castle of Rebec, where Augustine revived, and after seeing his murdered companion buried in the neighboring Dominican Convent at Pavia, continued his journey alone. Arrived at Paris, Blessed Augustine resumed his studies, and gave the same satisfaction that he had already given in Italy and Hungary. He cultivated a very special devotion to the Angelic Doctor, Saint Thomas Aquinas, and sought so to model his life upon his that some of his ancient biographers have called him a disciple of that holy doctor.

But that he actually studied under Saint Thomas is easily shown to be a mistake, seeing that the holy Doctor died in the year 1274, two or three years before Augustine entered the Dominican Order.

When his studies were finished he returned to his native country, and began the work of the apostolate among the people. With a heart free from sin, his intellect ripened by study, and his senses subdued by penance, his words had a wonderful effect upon his hearers. Many were converted. He rooted out the vices prevalent among the people, dissipated the clouds of ignorance which darkened their minds, and banished many evil superstitions which had crept into their daily life.

Finding that he was insufficient alone to contend against the many evils around him, and in order to train up apostolic men for the work of preaching, he built several monasteries of his Order in Dalmatia.

When he had preached several years in his native country, he was called by his superiors into Italy. The quarrels of the Guelphs and Ghibbelines had destroyed the peace of almost every town and village in Italy, and had opened the way to innumerable errors against the faith. God raised up many holy and apostolic men to meet this danger, among whom Blessed Augustine was not the least. He preached much, and in many ways lessened the evil.

From Italy he was sent into Bosnia, at that time a Christian state, although infected with many false doctrines, especially those of the Manicheans. He preached there with the same zeal and success as in Italy. From thence he passed into Hungary, which was also in a very lamentable state, both of faith and morals, owing to civil wars caused by the death of King Ladislas, who left no children to succeed him. Hungary was divided into three parties: One in favor of Otho, Duke of Bavaria, grandson of Bela the Fourth; a second in favor of Wenceslaus the second, King of Bohemia, the son of the granddaughter of King Bela, King of Hungary; and the third, and strongest, which supported the claim of Charles Robert, Prince of Anjou, son of the King of Sicily, and nephew of Saint Louis of France. Undoubtedly he had the strongest claim to the Hungarian crown, being a nephew of Ladislas, his father having married the Princess Mary, sister of that king.

Pope Boniface Eighth sent Cardinal Nicholas Bocasini, Bishop of Ostia, of the Order of Friar Preachers, as Legate into Hungary to further the cause of Charles Robert. While

there Cardinal Bocasini became the eye-witness of the evangelical labors and indefatigable zeal of Blessed Augustine, and when, two years later, he was raised to the pontifical throne, taking the name of Benedict 11th, called him into Italy, to consult him upon the state of Hungary. When he had been several days in Rome he made preparations to return. But the Pope, hearing of it, sent for him and appointed him Bishop of Zagrab, or Agram, in Hungary. Blessed Augustine wished to decline the honor, and was only led to accept it by the Pope's absolute command.

He was allowed to set out for his diocese after his consecration. This was in the year 1303. He found his Diocese in a very lamentable state. It had been subjected to an invasion of the Tartars sixty years before, and had not yet recovered from that fearful scourge. They had destroyed all the churches and monasteries, burnt the sacred books, and everything which could tend to preserve the faith; so that in a few years the people had become ignorant, immoral, and almost uncivilized. But the greatest evil was that the clergy themselves had suffered no less than the peo-

ple, and had become grossly negligent of their sacred duties.

Two holy Bishops had successively attempted to remedy this sad state of affairs, but both had died before effecting any radical reform, a third had increased the evil, the fourth, the immediate predecessor of Blessed Augustine, had been translated to the archepiscopal see of Grau, just as he was preparing to put his diocese in order.

Blessed Augustine began by reforming the clergy of his cathedral, and with marvellous tact and prudence succeeded in leading them to a more mortified and self-denying life. His personal example greatly contributed to this result, but it was by gentleness and kindness that he gained their hearts.

He gave away the greater part of his episcopal revenues to support the poor, widows, and orphans; the remainder, after providing for his own necessities, he spent on the house of God.

He increased the cathedral chapter by founding new prebandary stalls, which he filled with holy and zealous priests, educated under his own eyes.

Having thus reformed the clergy of his Cathedral, he set about the reformation of the clergy of the diocese. He visited the parishes, carrying with him all necessaries for the orderly celebration of the Divine Offices, books, holy oils, and ornaments for the altar, and appointed an able and pious priest for every parish.

This salutary visitation the Bishop made every year. He also held an annual synod to discuss all questions relating to the right administration of the diocese. One of his synodal addresses has come down to us. It is of great erudition and describes in graphic terms the duties of a true pastor of souls.

These visitations, which were always made on foot, were not only productive of good to the pastors, but equally so to the people.

He led the pious to serve God better, and the sinner to the feet of Christ, there to weep for his sins, and to receive pardon. He restored peace everywhere, and reconciled enemies. As he walked along the road the poor country people crowded around him to ask his blessing, to receive an alms from his ever open hands, or to beg him to cure the sick,

whom they carried to him from their houses, and none ever went away without some spiritual blessing.

He reduced the expenses of his episcopal palace to the very lowest sum consistent with dignity, that he might have more to give to the poor, and every year published an account of the way in which he spent his income; looking upon himself as the mere administrator of the episcopal revenues.

One of his immediate predecessors had begun to build a magnificent Gothic Cathedral which had never been finished. Blessed Augustine completed it, decorated and furnished it and the sacristies with great splendor.

Soon after he was consecrated Bishop of Zagrab, he built a monastery for the Fathers of the Dominican Order, near his episcopal palace; for he felt the want of men devoted to the apostolic life, who, free from parochial duties, could go about preaching and instructing the people. He afterwards founded several others in various parts of his diocese. While this hard-working Bishop procured valuable spiritual advantages for the people

under his care, he did not neglect his own soul, and was accustomed to retire into the monastery of Zagrab, to refresh his tired spirit in calm meditation, and the community duties he loved so much. He attended choir like the humblest religious, and in all things conformed to the rules of the monastery, and when one of the priests of the diocese expressed his surprise that the Bishop should so often be found in the monastery, he answered by citing the example of his patron, the great Saint Augustine, of Hippo. In favor of the religious of this monastery he wrought an astonishing miracle.

The water of the little river which fertilized the country was unfit to drink, on account of its mineral qualities. The Fathers having no other means of supply, knowing the holiness of the Bishop, and the influence of his merits with God, asked him to help them. He prayed earnestly, but fearing that when his prayers were heard they would attribute it to his merits, he ordered the Fathers to pray also. After they had prayed they bored a well, and at once the water spouted out. It has never ceased to flow, and is still

called Saint Augustine's fountain. This is but one of many miracles, and it is said they became so frequent, that to rid himself of the importunity of the people who crowded round him continually, asking for a miracle, he planted a tree near Czernick, in the middle of his diocese, which he solemnly blessed, and sent all who asked a miracle from him to this tree to gather some of its leaves, and in all cases they were cured. It was still in existence in the seventeenth century, and was called Saint Augustine's tree; and although continually stripped of its leaves by the people, was still alive and flourishing. The Turks, who had taken a castle in the neighborhood, having been eye-witnesses of these miracles, thought to obtain the same miraculous cures, but being disappointed, set fire to it. It was soon consumed, but a new tree sprang from its roots, which became possessed of the same miraculous powers as the parent tree. In time a beautiful chapel was built there, and was much frequented by the people.

In the year 1308, Pope Clement the 5th sent Cardinal Gentile de Montefiori, of the

Order of Saint Francis, to try to persuade the Hungarians to acknowledge Charles Robert as their lawful king.

Ladislas, son of King Wencelaus of Bohemia, who had seized the throne, had led so licentious a life that he had lost the favor of the powerful nobles who had crowned him. The Duke of Bavaria, learning this, entered the country with a powerful army and was crowned, King Ladislas having fled. The Duke's reign was of short duration; he was taken prisoner by the Prince of Transylvania. It was at this time Cardinal Gentile arrived in Hungary. Blessed Augustine had never ceased to further the cause of Charles Robert. Cardinal Gentile, having learned of his holiness and influence, at once took him into his confidence. They acted in unison so wisely that they succeeded in assembling all the leading nobles and Bishops of the country in the Convent of the Dominican Fathers, near Buda-Pest, to debate the matter.

The Cardinal opened with a long speech, which does not seem to have been so successful as he desired, for the nobles murmured loudly, and declared they would choose their

own king, and not have one thrust upon them by the Pope.

The holy Bishop Augustine then addressed them, and knowing their character, succeeding in calming their angry feelings, and by mild and prudent language, joined to sound reasoning, brought them to acknowledge Charles Robert as their king. He was crowned with the ancient iron crown of Hungary a few days afterwards. Thus, after many years of labors and prayers, Blessed Augustine succeeded in restoring peace to the distracted kingdom. For the good of Church and State the newly crowned king kept Augustine for some time near his person, that he might have the benefit of his advice. Two provincial councils of the Church in Hungary were held at this time, at Buda and Presbourgh, in which the influence of the Bishop of Zagrab was powerfully felt. In the year 1311, Pope Clement the Fifth called him to take part in the general council of Vienne, in France. He returned to his diocese May, 1312, and again labored zealously for the honor and glory of God and the salvation of souls. His efforts were crowned

with success. Many infidels and heretics were converted, and day by day the faithful increased in fervor and holiness.

The religious of the different religious Orders occupied themselves in preaching to the people, and the secular clergy became scarcely less edifying. All these improvements were due to the energy, and to a great extent to the personal example, of Blessed Augustine.

But God now wished to try him, and to perfect his virtues by means of persecutions. The Governor of the Province of Dalmatia was one Mladen, a man of distinguished family and very wealthy, but cruel and avaricious. During the long interregnum he had seized the opportunity to make himself a petty tyrant; had become master of several important towns and fortified positions, which were really outside his province, reduced the poor to a miserable state of slavery, and persecuted those bishops and priests who dared to withstand him. He had driven bishops from their sees, appointed unworthy men in their stead, and appropriated to himself much of the property of the Church.

The holy Bishop Augustine dared to op-

pose him, and in consequence Mladen became his deadly enemy. He not only refused to restore the Church property he had seized, or repair the evils he had caused, but began openly to persecute the fearless Bishop of Zagrab. Blessed Augustine was much afflicted, but did not lose his peace of mind, putting his trust in God, and increasing his austerities and prayers, to draw down God's mercy upon the miserable tyrant. King Charles Robert would willingly have defended him, but could not, for the servant had become almost as powerful as his master.

God, who had thus tried the holy Bishop's patience, now removed him to another scene of labors. King Robert of Sicily asked Pope John 22d to give Blessed Augustine the See of Nocera, a town in his kingdom, which was unhappily infected with the errors and lax morals of the Mahometans. Many Saracens, during the evil reign of Frederick 2d, had settled there, and, although they had afterwards been expelled from the town, left behind them many remnants of their shameful doctrines and practices.

The Pope consented, and King Robert at

once invited Augustine to accept the See. Although Augustine feared to leave his diocese to the mercies of Mladen, he accepted, and set out for Nocera. He distributed all he had to the poor, and quitted the diocese of Zagrab as poor as he had entered it, carrying nothing with him but his breviary. This was in the year 1317; he was then 58 years of age. On his way to Italy he paid a visit to his relations in Trau, and also to his mother's family in the town of Sign, but unhappily he found that they were all heart and soul in the service of Mladen. To find them supporters of such a man, and thus accomplices in his crimes and injustice, caused him great grief, and he tried by all means to induce them to abandon his cause; unhappily he could not succeed and endowed with the gift of prophecy, he foretold many evils, which God soon after inflicted upon them for their sins.

He left them, and continued his journey, until having come to the boundary of his new diocese, he fell on his knees and prayed God to give him strength to govern it for his honor and glory and for the salvation of souls. Amid the acclamations of the people he

solemnly took possession of his cathedral and diocese.

His first public act was to restore the name of "Saint Mary of Victories" to Nocera; knowing well that it was to the Blessed Virgin he must look for help in his coming conflict with heresy and immorality. In a short time the place became truly Christian, all the superstitions left by the Mahometans soon disappeared, and vice was destroyed; in short, he employed the same means and with the same success as at Zagrab. He built a church and monastery in Nocera for the Fathers of his Order, who again proved his most valuable helpers in the reformation of his diocese. He was truly a model Christian Bishop, visiting and instructing the people, full of zeal for the honor of God, building churches, ever at work for the sanctification of those committed to his charge. His very appearance, always calm and sweet, made one love him even more than his gifts of miracles and prophecy. He was of extraordinary height, being half as tall again as ordinary men. His beard was long, and his whole bearing majestic. "His cheeks," says an old

writer, "were ruddy on account of the ardor of his soul, his eyes like two serene stars which calm the storms, his head bald."

In his novitiate he had made three resolutions, which he faithfully kept all his life. The first was to observe all the rules of the Dominican Order inviolably. This rule he never broke, even when in his capacity of Bishop he might, without any impropriety, have relaxed the rules to meet circumstances. He never eat meat, never was dispensed or dispensed himself from any of its fasts prescribed by the Dominican constitutions, although they comprise more than half the year. One day he was dining at the same table with Benedict 11th, himself a strict observer of the Dominican rules, when some partridges were put before him, the Pope thinking he required some strong food on account of his great labors. Blessed Augustine at once determined not to eat them, but was perplexed how to refuse without being rude to the Pope. So he betook himself to prayer, his constant refuge in any difficulty, and they were at once changed into fish before their eyes.

It was this same zeal for the rules and monastic observances of his Order which led him to make all his journeys on foot, to wear the Dominican habit after his elevation to the episcopate, and to practise the strictest poverty. His habit was always of the poorest, and his cappa, or black cloak, was so old and thread-bare that it consisted of more than a hundred pieces. It is still preserved as a holy relic in the Cathedral of Nocera. The friars once wished him to ask a certain Baron to pay them a legacy the Baron's father had left Blessed Augustine in his will. "My Father," Saint Dominic, he answered, "by his will ordered me not to have any temporal possessions. The Baron's father, by his will wishes that I should. I would rather follow the wishes of my own Father than of his"

His second resolution was never on any occasion to relax his exercises of prayer, or to omit his daily meditations. This resolution he also faithfully observed. He kept himself continually in the presence of God, and often robbed time from his rest to spend in prayer.

The last of the three resolutions was to cherish in his heart a warm and childlike de-

votion towards our Blessed Lady, to his holy father Saint Dominic, and to all the saints of the Dominican Order. He gave our Blessed Lady the most beautiful proof of love in the sweet smelling lily of chastity, which bloomed always unfaded in his virginal heart. He never began any duty without saluting his Mother in heaven, and was accustomed to pray thus to her: "Give me strength, good Mother! and I will preach thy name." To Saint Dominic he was scarcely less devout. His life was full of obedience to the holy founder of his beloved Order, and few more beautiful examples of a true and perfect Dominican can be found than this holy man. By becoming a Bishop he did not cease to be a religious, and he used his influence, in all legitimate ways, to extend the influence of his Order. He ordered the feast of Saint Dominic to be kept in all the churches of his diocese, and gave his clergy the Dominican breviary and ceremonies, which they kept for several centuries. To all the holy saints who wear the white robes of the Friar Preachers in the court of heaven, he was most devout, more especially to Saint Thomas Aquinas, for whose solemn

canonization he labored much, and to Saint Peter of Verona, whose arm he possessed and bequeathed to his cathedral at Zagrab.

The year before his death his prediction of the punishment which would be inflicted upon his relations for having given their support to the tyrant Mladen was accomplished. Excessive cruelties had made him so hateful to the people of Dalmatia, that several towns united in league against him. Trau and Sign were among the number.

Mladen, at the head of a large army, marched against Sign, and besieged it. He destroyed the outworks, burnt and plundered all the houses round the town. After this he sent messengers to the beseiged citizens, to propose a settlement; they fell into the trap.

Their magistrates and leading men, as he had requested, went out to his camp, when he treacherously caused them all to be arrested, loaded with chains, and cruelly put to death, under his eyes.

After thus wreaking his vengeance upon Sign, he marched towards Trau, but happily met with a repulse and his tyrrany soon came to an end. His brother Paul, at the head of

the Dalmatian nobles, attacked him on his way; all his satellites fled, when they saw his day had passed, and thus, abandoned by the greater part of his army, he was taken prisoner, and sent to the King of Hungary, who spared his life, but imprisoned him in the town of Zagreb, where he had insulted the holy Bishop Augustine for justly opposing his evil designs.

These important events happened in 1323, and on the third of August of the same year Augustine died at the age of 64, in the 20th year of his episcopate, during which time he had never ceased to fulfil with untiring zeal all the functions of a true successor of the apostles, of a father of the poor, of a good shepherd occupied solely with the care of those committed to his chage. A few days before his death he felt his end approaching, and went to the Dominican monastery to die among his brethren. He was buried in the Dominican church, as he had desired. His sanctity was proved after his death by very numerous miracles, but he became famous more especially for miraculous cures of those possessed by evil spirits. These miracles, and the holiness of his life, caused Charles

Duke of Calabria to petition the Pope to approve his cultus. The Duke's letter to the Pope, dated Oct. 20, 1324, only two years after Augustine's death, is still extant. Pope John 22d acceded to this request, canonized the holy Bishop, and granted a proper office for his feast to be said in the diocese of Nocera. This office is also still in existence. A picture of the Saint was placed in the cathedral, having this inscription written underneath, "Saint Augustine, Bishop of Nocera, of the Order of Friar Preachers;" but although his canonization seems to have been certain, it was thought fit, in the year 1702, to reconfirm his cultus, as no authentic records existed to prove the canonization by John 22d, except a constant tradition and unbroken cultus. Clement 11th, therefore, in the year 1702, confirmed the cultus of Blessed Augustine, and allowed his office to be kept by the Dominican Provinces throughout the world, in the ecclesiastical province of Benevento, of which the diocese of Nocera is a part, and in the dioceses of Spoleto, Trau and Zagrab.

His relics, comprising his body, stole, maniple, girdle, alb, shirt, and hat are pre-

served in the chapel of Saint Roche in the church of the Dominican Fathers at Nocera. The hat is in special veneration, and is solemnly carried to the sick, and has been miraculous in many cases. His relics were placed in a costly marble shrine in the year 1611. He has always been regarded as one of the principal patrons of Nocera. His feast, which was originally kept on the 3d of August, the anniversary of his death, is now celebrated on the 8th of the same month. Tomko, Coadjutor Bishop of Zabrab, wrote his life in the 17th century.

But before closing this life we must not omit to record the conversion of Mladen, a miracle of grace attributed by all to the merits of Blessed Augustine. He was kept prisoner many years in the town of Zagrab, without showing any signs of repentance for his sins. At length he escaped, and flying from town to town, at last fell into the hands of the inhabitants of Trau, who spared his life, and in a short time his heart became softened, and he who had led the life of a notorious sinner and evil-doer, became a model of Christian penance, and died a holy death.

Prayer.

Ant. I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon a rock.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed Augustine,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God, who wast pleased to provide for Thy Church, in example of the good Shepherd, in the Blessed Augustine, mercifully grant that through his intercession we may be found worthy to be placed in Thy pasture forever. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSED FRANCIS DE POSADAS.

BLESSED FRANCIS DE POSADAS.

MODEL OF ROSARIANS.

September 20th.

THIS humble priest, and servant of God, has left us the memory of a sweet example of a Christ-like life. Having passed through childhood holily, he gave himself to God in the springtime of youth. A model religious, zealous priest, fervent apostle, a wise and favorite director of souls, he was, above all things, a devoted servant of Mary and Dominic; always and everywhere preaching the Rosary, that beautiful devotion which Mary's hands and Dominic's lips gave to the Christian world.

He lived in the 17th century, and was one of those chosen souls whose saintly lives saved the world from utter corruption in an age when unbelief, infidelity, and immorality ravaged the fold of Christ. His father, Stephen Martin Posada, and his mother, Mary

Fernandez, although poor, both belonged to ancient families. During the war under Philip the 4th, they were forced to flee from Lama de Arcos in Castille, their native town; and, wandering from place to place in Andalusia, went to Cordova, where, with what remained of their earthly possessions, they opened a linen and silk store; but this having failed, and all their little fortune spent, they sold fruits and beans, until at last his mother was forced to cry eggs in the streets.

This pious couple had several children, but God had taken them to himself. The afflicted and childless woman, finding that she was again about to become a mother, offered her unborn babe to the Blessed Virgin Mary, promising her that if it was a boy and lived, she would persuade him to enter the Order of Saint Dominic, and that when he was ordained priest he should say his first Mass at the altar of the Holy Fountain, a favorite shrine of the Blessed Virgin in Cordova. She also made a visit to the chapel of our Lady of the Rosary of the Dominican Church of St. Paul in Cordova, and humbly kneeling before the altar, prayed in words like to these:

"My Mother and my Queen! may it be pleasing to you that my child may belong to you."

This child, so piously dedicated to God before its entrance into this world, was born November 25th, 1644. At the moment of his birth a new star appeared in the heavens above his mother's poor and unpretentious dwelling, and a very singular light was seen in the chamber, which caused all present to say: "This child will become a saint." He was baptized in the parish-church of Saint Andrew. As soon as his mother was able she carried him to the chapel of our Lady of the Rosary in St. Paul's Church, and placing him at the feet of the statue of the Queen of Heaven, said: "This my son is no longer mine but thine." This gift was accepted; for Mary took the little child Francis, as we shall see, all for her own.

It was noticed that on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays he took nourishment only once and not until late in the evening. The first word he pronounced was the sweet name of Mary, and the first complete sentence the "Hail Mary." When a mere child he began

to fast on bread and water every Friday in Lent. At the age of five he made his first confession, and surprised the confessor by his more than child-like wisdom. He was allowed to receive Holy Communion when he was seven years of age. Every morning he served several Masses in the Dominican Church of St. Paul. His heart was full of compassion for the poor, and he set aside all he could lay his hands upon for them, although there was no abundance in his mother's house. She gave him two little images, one of our Divine Lord, the other of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and he made a little altar for them and said the Rosary there every day.

He often gathered together as many as forty children of his own age, and forming a procession, led them through the streets of the town saying the Rosary. Although these children were so young, they were so modest in their behavior, and so earnest in their piety, that one of the principal citizens, Louis de Xérès, took great delight in accompanying them, saying: "Who could fail to be devout, seeing such piety in children?" After they had said the Rosary Francis preached a little

sermon to them. "Why do you offend God?" he would say; "God, who gives us being and who takes care of us always." "Be careful about what you say," he once said, "because those who speak evil words and those who listen will both become the prey of the devil."

If they came to a wayside cross, that beautiful sight so often seen in Catholic countries, they all knelt down and prayed thus: "O Cross! upon which our God died, separate us from the evil company of the devil."

Sometimes he and his companions went to play on the slopes of the Sierra Morena mountains, near the town. While they amused themselves with childish play he would retire unseen into one of the caves in the mountain sides, to pray and very often to do penance.

Several times during his youth God showed how dear this young boy was to him, by preserving him in a wonderful way from danger. Thus, when attacked with the pest, and all hope of recovery had been given up, he suddenly recovered, contrary to all expectations.

Another time, attempting to pick a flower, he fell into a well, but was miraculously suspended in the air, and was drawn out again

by no earthly hand. Once, while bathing, he was carried away by the current; recommending himself to Mary, the Mother of God, he suddenly found himself on the river side.

The Most Holy Virgin appeared to him one night in a dream, holding several rosaries in her hand, and sweetly invited him to select one of them: no doubt to reward him for his faithfulness in reciting the rosary, and to encourage him more and more to love that beautiful devotion. His angel guardian made himself visible to him frequently under the form of a beautiful child, clothed in the habit of Saint Dominic.

Francis knew that his mother had vowed that he should enter the Order of that holy saint, and he desired nothing more than to do so. But his father having died, his mother remarried. Her second husband was a man of strange character, and would not hear of it. Instead of allowing him to learn Latin, he apprenticed him to a workman, who treated him with great cruelty; but Francis put his trust in God, and bore all this ill-treatment meekly.

Other misfortunes soon fell upon him. The devil, seeing the patient youth become holier

and holier, began to persecute him, hoping to wear out his endurance, and to entice him into some sin. Under the form of a black-a-moor he appeared to him, and tried to snatch the rosary from his neck, where he always carried it. The holy youth held it with one hand, while he made the saving sign of the cross with the other, saying to the devil: "Look at the cross!" and the arch-fiend immediately took flight. Having thus learnt how formidable the Rosary is to the devil, he always carried two with him: one round his neck and the other in his pocket. The devil, not being able to harm his soul, revenged himself upon his body by striking and maltreating him; God permitting this to test his patience and humility.

Some persons having noticed how Francis was tormented, fearing that he might be possessed, took him to be examined by a learned priest, who after he had questioned him said: "Tell his parents that he ought to be set to study, that he may become a religious, and then all this will cease." His mother was only too willing that he should do so, but his step-father refused to receive him at home.

One of the Dominican Fathers of Saint Paul's monastery came to his aid and offered him a part of his own cell. He gladly accepted this offer, and began to study Latin grammar with the children, although he was 17 years of age, rejoicing in the contempt heaped upon him on account of his ignorance. He soon surpassed them, and showed that he was possessed of great aptitude for study, and endowed with natural quickness of mind. His mother, having become a widow a second time, he returned to his home. He cherished his mother, served her with such tender love that she often said to her friends: "My son is a saint; he bathes my feet, he makes my bed, obeys me in all things, and gives me every mark of love." How different his conduct from that of young men of our time! They accept every service from their parents, but give nothing in return. In his old age he once said: "If God is so merciful to me it is on account of the good will with which I always obeyed my mother." And when he was nominated Bishop several times he said: "I attribute these marks of honor to God alone, who wishes perhaps to reward me for

the ardent desire I always had to honor my mother."

At length, when he was sufficiently advanced in his studies, his mother, at his own request, applied to the Dominican Fathers of Saint Paul's monastery in Cordova, to receive him as a choir novice. She was refused, not on account of his family, which was an ancient and honorable one, but because his mother had exercised the calling of huckster in the city.

This was an unlooked-for and terrible blow to Francis, and a great mortification to his worthy mother. So she persuaded him to ask entrance into another religious Order, where he was joyfully accepted.

When the day came for him to go he went to say farewell to the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Rosary Chapel of the Dominican Church. He found it very hard to leave this chapel, which he loved so much. On his return he seemed very sad, and when his mother asked the cause of his grief, he replied: "I am sad, and shall weep all my life because, wishing to be a son of Saint Dominic, you oblige me to enter another Order." Alarmed by what he

said she went to consult the Dominican Father who had been so kind to him. This good Father, learning how firm the young man was in his desire to become a Dominican, bethought of some excuse to prevent his going to the monastery in which he had been accepted, so that by gaining time he might find some monastery of the Dominican Order willing to receive him.

Accordingly he recommended him to the Prior of the celebrated monastery of Scala Coeli, founded by Blessed Alvarez of Cordova, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, three miles from Cordova, on the first slope of the Sierra Morena mountains. The fathers of this monastery, after making inquiries, received him unanimously, and after giving him the habit, sent him to make his year of novitiate in the monastery of Saint Catherine de Jaen. As soon as the Prior of Saint Paul's in Cordova heard that Francis was about to receive the Dominican habit at Scala Coeli, he immediately wrote to oppose it; but being too late, he laid a complaint before the Father Provincial, who having examined into the matter, confirmed what the Prior of Scala Coeli

had done. Francis entered the Order in the year 1662, when he was 18 years of age.

After his novitiate he made his profession, November the 25th, 1663, his nineteenth birthday, and then returned to Scala Coeli; upon which the Prior of Saint Paul's forbade him to visit Cordova. This was very humiliating; but no doubt it was the intention of God to humble him early in life, and thus to lay the foundation of solid humility in his heart. From Scala Coeli he was sent to the monastery at San Lucar at Barrameda, to study philosophy and theology. There he became remarkable, not only for his sanctity, but also for his quickness in his studies. One day he heard Father Gonzalez, a Jesuit, preach; from that time he became a saint, all on fire with the love of God. He redoubled his fasts and penances, and gave himself to the service of the poor, striving in all things, great and small, to become a perfect religious.

He was ordained priest at Barrameda, after which he went to Cordova to say his first Mass at the altar of Our Lady of the Holy Fountain, to fulfil his mother's vow, and then returned to San Lucar, where he was employed

in preaching. He converted many sinners in that town; and his zeal for souls became such as to rival that of the great Dominican Apostle, Saint Vincent Ferrer. One woman, whom he converted, said of him: "No one could fail to be converted having heard this saint preach."

God made known to him that he would become a great preacher and fisher of men. One night he had the following dream: "I dreamed," he said, "that I was on the banks of a river catching fish with my mouth. Astonished at this peculiar manner of fishing, I awoke, and at first was afraid it was some deception, but after this dream I felt so great a love for God and my neighbor, that not being able to remain in the monastery, I went out into the country, and not finding any souls to save there, began to fill the air with my sighs."

The prediction contained in this vision was fully verified in his apostolic ministry.

Having been recalled to Scala Coeli, he passed through Cordova, where the Prior of Saint Paul's, who had heard of his virtues and holiness, asked him to preach in the church. He willingly consented, but the

fathers of the monastery refused to listen to him. He bore this affront with patience. He also preached in the other churches in the town, and having done much good by his sermons, the fathers of Saint Paul's monastery at length owned they had done him wrong by their behavior towards him.

One who had been the foremost in the opposition to him, wished to make him a public reparation. When Blessed Francis came out of the pulpit after one of his sermons, he went to meet him, embraced him with great affection, in the sight of all the people, and formed such an affection for him that he often accompanied him on his missions.

On his return to Scala Coeli the fathers appointed him to take charge of a hospital, close to one of the gates of the town of Cordova, which was under the care of the Dominicans. He lived there until his death, being absent only when he gave missions.

The day of his arrival he saw an angel, who told him that he would meet with many crosses there. In the evening he always rang the bell to call the people together to say the rosary, and in the day-time remained for hours

in the confessional, where crowds gathered the whole day, he having to remain there frequently until late at night. Very great sinners went to confession to him, and he began to experience many temptations when hearing the sad stories of their lives. "But God made me as if dead," he said, "and I began to learn how generous he is to those who expose themselves to danger for the sake of souls."

To this gift God added an intuitive knowledge of the state of his penitents' souls. "Why do you hide such and such sins from me," he said to some who concealed their grievous sins, and he told them the number and kind of those sins of which they were so ashamed. "You must confess this sin," he said to another, "because you have not yet accused yourself of it," and he named the sin. And to a woman who kept silence about some sin she was guilty of he said: "This is the sin you are ashamed to acknowledge." He reminded one man of a sin he had committed twelve years before, which he thought was completely hidden. To another he said: "Why do you come to confession without any intention of banishing the hatred from your heart which

you have for your own daughter?" And in this way he led them to unburden their souls to God.

Sometimes the Blessed Virgin Mary sent him sinners to convert. One day she appeared to a woman who was leading a bad life, and said to her: "Go to Father Posadas and confess your sins to him." She went, changed her life, and spent the remainder of her days in penance for her sins. The holy angels aided him in the work of the ministry. One evening he went to hear the confession of a woman who was in danger of death. It was a very stormy night and the wind blew out his lantern; but an angel appeared at his side carrying a torch, and accompanied him to the house and back again to the hospital. Another time, as he was seated near his confessional, he saw two women enter the church, to one of whom he said: "Come here, my daughter; the Lord calls you; come and make your confession." And the woman, turning to look at him, saw that he was surrounded by a heavenly light. Then, although she had no intention of reconciling herself to God, she spent the whole

morning in making a general confession; and so sincerely repentant was she that she soon repaired all the scandals she had formerly given.

Blessed Francis touched the hearts of the most hardened without difficulty. One day a certain person found him in tears and asked him what was the matter. "What can be the matter with me," he said, "if it is not that I am the vilest, most miserable, and most infamous man and the most ungrateful wretch on the face of the earth."

One day, near the end of his life, he said to his confessor: "I should so much like to have a great sorrow for my sins, that every morning in the holy Mass I ask my divine Lord to grant me true contrition." When he preached the church was filled early in the morning, and many were obliged to stand in the porch. Sometimes it became necessary to preach in the open air, the crowd being so large. Bishops, Inquisitors, the clergy, many noblemen and persons of high rank were to be found among his audience, and every one said: "He is a saint; another St. Vincent Ferrer; a second St. John Chrysostom."

As soon as he began to speak his voice made his hearers tremble; and after awhile the love of God which filled his heart set his soul all on fire, his face shone with supernatural light, and his body often seemed surrounded with rays of glory. Many times his feet were raised above the earth, and the people could see that he no longer stood on the ground but was raised in the air. His voice resounded afar, and the astonished people often cried out that he was an angel and not a man. Once a bright flame was seen to come from his mouth, at another time he was surrounded by bright seraphim enveloped in clouds of light; this was testified to by many witnesses. But when he preached of the goodness of God, or of the sweetness with which he invites and patiently awaits sinners, or of the love of God for us, his tears fell, sobs stifled his voice, and he was frequently obliged to leave the pulpit without finishing his sermon. Thus it is related that preaching on the feast of St. Philip Neri on the love of God for men, he began to weep vehemently, and his tears excited such emotion among the audience that he was obliged to discontinue his sermon.

When preaching missions he found many who were ignorant of their Christian duties, and often spent the whole day in instructing them in Catholic doctrine.

He completely changed the people of Cordova. He persuaded the inhabitants to close the theatres, and all other places of amusements dangerous to morality, by preaching energetically against vice and sinful pleasures. At first the nobles and young men about town were very angry, but the saint's preaching and his holy life gained their hearts, and they too repented of their sins, and began to live according to the teaching of religion. Missions succeeded each other in every parish church in the town, preached by zealous and holy priests, headed by Cardinal Belluze, at that time canon of the cathedral.

Processions of penitents reciting the Rosary wended their way through the streets, and the confraternities in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary increased so much that the whole town appeared devoted to her service. When Blessed Francis went out the people followed him, saying: "Here is the saint." As he passed they came out of the houses to kneel

and receive his blessing, to kiss his scapular, or obtain something which had belonged to him. All this filled him with confusion. Every one sought his counsel, believing that he was enlightened by God. The Bishop, parish priests, the governor of the town, judges,—all applied to him for advice in difficult cases, and he often gave proof that his judgment was superior to that of men.

His name became famous in every part of Spain. King Charles 2d wished to have him for his confessor, and twice nominated him Bishop; first of Alhieri, in Sardinia, afterwards of Cadiz; but notwithstanding the earnest wishes of Cardinal Salazar, he would not accept so great a dignity. To all the Cardinal's reasons he contented himself by saying: "Your Eminence wishes to persuade me, but you will never shake my resolution." He could never think of the honors which all showed him without tears, and when a friend asked him what gave him such grief, he said: "Alas! have I not need to weep for fear that when I try to humble myself I only meet with praises and honor?"

When the Fathers of the Monastery of the

Holy Martyrs in Cordova elected him Prior, he refused the dignity, and in his letter to the Provincial said: "O that the Blessed Virgin would come to my aid. I would rather be condemned to a galley-ship than be Prior."—Later on, when he received several votes for the office of Provincial, he smiled and said: "I think the fathers wish to have a carnival at my expense." The see of Cordova having become vacant, a report gained ground that he would be nominated. This annoyed him much.—"Would it not be monstrous," he said, "to see a man brought up in the midst of market baskets in this town with a mitre on his head?"

But it was when he thought of his unworthiness to be a priest, to stand at the altar to say Mass, and take his God, hidden in the Blessed Sacrament, into his hands, that he felt humbled the most. He was once heard to say: "O! what fatality! a God to come in *my* hands!" When he came to the elevation in the Mass, his body trembled, and he could not stifle his sighs.

One day, when our Lord had deigned to appear to him in the Blessed Sacrament, his agitation

was so great that the assistant feared the Host would break in his hands. At another time, wrapped in ecstacy, his feet were raised from the ground without his knowing it, for he said to his confessor afterwards: "I know not if it was the earth which was wanting to me, but I do not understand what happened. Would to God that I was grateful to him for all his graces." Once, when he said the words of consecration, our Lord said to him: "My son, it is I, who am what I am." He remained several instants out of himself, and then elevating the host, his soul drew his body upwards and he was suspended some time in the air. When he came down again a number of persons saw that he was surrounded by brilliant light. This heavenly light frequently appeared when he celebrated the holy mysteries; the wrinkles on his face vanished, his brow became as transparent as glass, and his cheeks, which were usually pale, all on fire. At the Gospel a ray of light was sometimes seen to issue from his mouth; and twice on the feast of Pentecost a light, so dazzling that the whole altar was lit by it, came from his body. The Most Holy Virgin sometimes ap-

peared to him, when he celebrated the Mass in her honor. Once on the feast of her Nativity, she caused him to see her in her cradle; and on the feast of her Compassion she appeared to him as she stood at the foot of the cross. The holy Apostles Saints Peter and Paul, the martyr St. Catherine, to whom he was most devout, and many other saints appeared to him on their feast days during the holy sacrifice. The angels themselves assisted at it, holding his hands at the elevation. We should not be astonished at this, for do we not know that the angels are our guardians upon earth, and that they always assist with great respect during Mass, adoring our hidden Saviour in the sacrament of his love? Our eyes are not worthy to see them, and many never give their holy presence a thought, yet they are no less around and about us, pray for us without ceasing, and continually preserve us from harm. Finding in Blessed Francis a pure soul, and a heart all given to God, they made themselves visible, to manifest his holiness and to give honor to God. Several persons recovered the health of their souls, and others the health of their bodies,

by attending Mass celebrated by the holy priest. At the end of the Mass numbers of sick crowded around him, asking him to read the Gospel over them, and many were healed. Among other miraculous cures worked in this way, he several times gave sight to the blind. One woman, advised by the doctors to prepare for death, after she had confessed, asked him to wash his fingers and to give her the water to drink. "What power is there in my hands?" he asked. "Father," answered the sick woman, "do you not say holy Mass?" "You are right," he said; "may your faith cure you," and having washed his hands, he gave her the water, and immediately she had drank it, she was cured.

There was a Moorish woman in Cordova, 104 years old, who had resisted all the charitable persuasions of her acquaintances to become a Christian. Blessed Francis prayed for her continually, and even she could not resist his prayers. One night the Blessed Virgin, accompanied by F. Francis, appeared to her, as she herself afterwards related. In the morning she sent for him. He was just about to begin Mass. He took off his vest-

ments, and turning to those present, said: "The business on which I am called is more pressing than the Mass; recommend me to God, for I am going to try to gain a soul." When he came to the sick woman he said, "Maria della Biancha, do you wish to become Christian?" "Yes," she answered, "I do." "I knew that yesterday evening," he said, "and I know also that you have had a visit from our Blessed Lady *della Biancha*." He then laid his rosary upon the sick old woman and sent for the parish priest, who baptized her and gave her the name of Maria della Biancha, in honor of the Blessed Virgin, by whom she had been saved. A little afterwards she became worse, when he said the prayers for a soul departing this life, during which she said: "Father Francis! I am dying." He covered her face when she was dead with his black cloak, and turning towards the assistants, he said: "You will see something wonderful," and lifting it he showed them the face of the dead woman, which had become marvellously white and beautiful; thus she was in reality as well as in name, "Maria della Biancha."

When he was sick and could not hear the

confessions of those who sent for him, he visited them in spirit. One day, when he had thus been to console one of his penitents, the sick man reproached his servants for not having saluted the Father on his leaving the house. They looked at each other in surprise to see if he was in his right mind, and declared that they had neither seen nor heard the Father. Once he forbade one of his penitents to discipline himself on his bare shoulders. This man, not liking the prohibition, began one night to take the discipline, according to his old custom. Just at that moment he heard Father Francis call him to the door. He was filled with confusion for having been discovered in an act of disobedience, but he was afterwards astonished to hear that Father Francis, owing to sickness, had not left the monastery for a single moment that evening.

One day Blessed Francis ran after a man in the street and overtaking him, said: "Brother, where are you going?" "Father," answered the man, "I am going to take a walk." "Your walk is a bad one," was the answer. "Pull out that cord you have hidden in your pocket. You have committed a great sin in losing the

respect which you ought to have for your mother, but remember that the mercy of God is greater than your sin." He then led the man to the church, where he spent three hours in preparing him for his confession, which was made with great sorrow and many resolutions of amendment.

There was a certain nun who, falling sick, was given up by the doctors. Father Francis found her full of regrets for leaving this life; he said: "God has warned you several times before, by an accident, and in other ways, with the hope of correcting you, and that is the reason why you are threatened with death to-day. Is it not so?" "I will amend," the sister replied. "If you will," he said, "I offer life to you in God's name. If you live as a good religious should, you will live a long time." And God kept the promise his servant Francis had made to her in his name, for she lived many years more.

Thus the life of the servant of God passed away in preaching, hearing confessions, and leading souls to God. At last God called him to his reward. The evening before he died he sent for the barber to shave his

tonsure, and when the man came said to him, "I am sick; please shave me." The next evening, hearing of the saint's death, he recalled to his mind that he had often said to Blessed Francis that he would not shave a dead man for a whole kingdom, and that the Father had answered that he would shave him to the end of his life. And he had no doubt that it was to hinder him from performing this sad duty after death that Blessed Francis was shaved about ten days before the usual day. He knew the hour when he would leave this world, and the kind of death he was to die. He said: "I shall die suddenly, and it will be soon." Having said Mass on the morning of September the 20th, 1713, he went into the confessional as usual. There were many people in the church, and it was remarked that he seemed very joyful. To his penitents he gave very salutary advice, telling them that it was the last they would receive from him. "I must give you a rule of life," he said to one, "because my infirmities increase, and later on I do not know if I shall be able to do so." He warned another of a great affront he would shortly receive, and counselled him

to bear it patiently. When it happened a few months afterwards, this man remembered what the Blessed Father had said to him. Another penitent, a man of great virtue, whom he loved very much, accompanied him to the sacristy door. When he left the church Father Francis looked at him with tears in his eyes, and said one word only, "Adieu," but he remained standing in the doorway. When the man reached the middle of the Church he turned, and the Father again said, "Adieu," and again a third time as he left the church. The priest and the penitent, who loved each other so much, saw each other for the last time on earth.

As he entered the hospital a religious asked him to console him in some spiritual trouble which effected him. Both sat down upon a bench, and the sad religious opened his heart to the holy priest and obtained peace. At table that day he was seized with an attack of apoplexy, and lost consciousness. The doctors giving no hope of his recovery, he was absolved and anointed, and the indulgences of the Dominican Order and the Rosary applied to him. Thinking he was

dying, the fathers sang the "Credo," a last act of faith for the soul which was about to appear before its Creator. When they saw that he still breathed, they suggested pious prayers to him, which he evidently heard and understood. At five o'clock his head sank; and again they sang the "Credo," after which he seemed to rest a little. At seven the fathers saw that he was on the point of death, and sang the "Credo," amid their tears, a third time, during which he calmly died. He was in his 69th year.

As soon as he was dead all kissed his feet. They divided among themselves all the little objects he was accustomed to use; and his habit, which was covered with blood, the doctors having bled him, they cut into pieces. The Viscount de Miranda obtained a glassful of blood, and sent it as a precious relic to his wife. Many sick were cured by it. The Viscountess remembered that one day, having desired him to give her something as a remembrance of him, Father Francis had answered: "I will give you the blood of my veins some day." At the moment of his death several persons saw a globe of fire in

the air above the hospital. Many others saw a bright star, and said one to the other, "Something extraordinary has taken place at Cordova;" and on hearing of the death of Blessed Francis, they ran in crowds to the hospital, only to find the doors closed.

His body was carried the same evening by the Fathers to the monastery of Saint Paul, followed by the people saying the Rosary. Every one tried to touch the body, which sent forth a sweet perfume. The face had kept its natural beauty, the limbs were yet warm and flexible, and from the opened vein flowed a stream of blood which was collected and religiously preserved.

Early next morning, by order of the Cathedral Chapter, the bells of the Cathedral were tolled, as if for the death of a Bishop; the bells of all the parish churches and monasteries were rung.

The Bishop of Buenos Ayres, the inquisitors, canons, the principal religious and noblemen all went to kiss the feet of the dead saint. The town authorities asked permission from the Prior of St. Paul's to make a tomb for him in the cemetery of the Domini-

can Monastery, and it was remarked that to do so it became necessary to remove the bodies of those very Fathers who had so bitterly opposed his entrance into the Dominican Order.

At the funeral the clergy, magistrates and noblemen assisted, in a body, to pay him this last mark of honor. The superiors of the religious orders carried the coffin, which, according to Dominican custom, was open. The crowd of people was so dense, that it became impossible to advance, and the devotion shown so great that they tried to steal his habit from his body, so that it became necessary to lock up the body in the sacristy, and postpone the burial. The next day, before sunrise, he was buried. The authorities of the town obtained one key of the coffin, and the other was left in the possession of the Dominican Fathers.

After his death miracles were worked in answer to prayer made to God through him. One in honor of the rosary, his favorite prayers, deserves special mention. A certain man was at the point of death ; some one offered him a rosary, which had touched the

body of the saint. He said: "This is a new idea; Father Francis was a good Christian, but no saint." Nevertheless, the rosary was hung around his neck, when the dying man immediately cried out: "Take it away, it burns me." "That is because you have not called upon the saint of God with faith," some one said to him. "O God, pardon me!" he cried out. "O saint of my soul! I believe that you are a saint, and a great one, too," and in an instant the fire which had burned him cooled, and he was cured.

Blessed Francis was beatified by Pius the 7th, in 1818. He was the author of several works. "The Triumph of Chastity," "The Life of the Venerable Mother Leonarda," a Dominican nun, "The life of Blessed Christopher of St. Catharine," founder of the hospital of Jesus of Nazareth in Cordova, "A life of St. Dominic," and "Warnings to the Town of Cordova," are the principal literary works he has left behind him.

Prayer.

Ant. He made an everlasting covenant with him, and made him blessed in glory.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed Francis,
R. That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God, who didst raise up Blessed Francis, Thy confessor, imbued with the sweetness of heavenly charity to be an illustrious preacher of Thy word, grant through his intercession that we may be kindled with the fire of Thy love, and live ever in Thy charity, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSED BENEDICT THE ELEVENTH.

BLESSED BENEDICT THE ELEVENTH.

July 7th.

NICOLAS BOCCASINA was born in the year 1240, at Traviso, a city in the north of Italy. It is uncertain what was the rank of his parents; some authors say that his father was a shepherd, some that he was a noble, and others, with more show of probability, that he was a notary. Touron contents himself with saying that he can neither refute nor establish any of these statements, because there is no ancient author whose opinion on this subject is not contradicted by some other author of the same century. "Butthat which is certain," he says, "is that the family of the servant of God, whether noble or plebeian, has gained a fame from his merits which it could not give him." His education was intrusted to the care of his uncle, the parish priest of Saint Andrew's, one of the principal churches of Traviso. He

was afterwards sent to continue his studies at Venice, where he became aware of his vocation to the religious life, and entered the Order of Saint Dominic in the year 1254, receiving the habit in the convent of Saints John and Paul, in that city, being then fourteen years of age. He did not change his name when he entered religion, and was called Brother Nicolas. During his novitiate he was very fervent in keeping the rule of the Order in its greatest perfection, it being necessary rather to check his austerities than to incite him to penance. After his religious profession he began his ecclesiastical studies, and soon became remarkable for diligent and constant application. Like all the saints of the Order, he especially loved the study of the Holy Scriptures. There seems little doubt, says Touron, that he made part of his studies under the care of the Angelic Doctor, Saint Thomas Aquinas, during the time in which that holy doctor taught at Bologna, Rome, and Naples. His humility caused him to hide his talents, and made him very unwilling to distinguish himself among his fellow students, and it would seem as if his

superiors, by the will of God, allowed him all the obscurity he desired. Thus his naturally noble character was strengthened by solid study, purified by prayer, and chastened by contemplation. The learned Dominican, Bernard Guidonis, Bishop of Lodève, says that Blessed Benedict once said of himself that he was fourteen years old when he became a Dominican, that he studied fourteen years, taught fourteen years, and passed fourteen years in various offices in the Order. After he completed his studies he taught in the Monasteries of Venice and Bologna, and preached with great success. A collection of his sermons was published, and may still be found in libraries of old Catholic books. He also published some learned commentaries on the Holy Scriptures. He became Master in Theology in the year 1295, and after filling several important offices in the Dominican Order, was twice elected Provincial of Lombardy, in 1286 and 1293. But while he held all these offices he never neglected to cultivate in himself a spirit of sanctity. As soon as his lecture in Theology or Holy Scriptures was over he hurried to the choir, there

to chant the praises of God in the company of his brothers; or went into the pulpit to preach to the large audiences who loved to hear him. He borrowed the hours from the night for study, and slept as little as possible. Having proved his capabilities as a superior, it is not to be wondered at that when the Fathers of the Dominican Order met together at a General Chapter in Strasbourg, in the year 1296, to elect a Master General, their choice fell upon him, and although nine hundred fathers took part in the election, it was unanimous, only one dissentient voice, and that was his own.

He fully answered the expectations formed of him; an example of holiness to all—he was at the same time a wise and prudent Superior. "Always venerable," says Bernard Guidomis, "and worthy of all praise; a model of virtue, a mirror of religion, holy in devotion, fervid in zeal, shining in wisdom, pleasing to God and man." He says that Benedict, during the two and a half years that he governed the Order, was a faithful observer of the rule, and caused the Fathers to keep it rather by example than by exhortations. He always travelled on foot, in imitation of

our holy Father Saint Dominic, and increased his already severe penances and mortifications.

While he held this office of Master General of the Dominican Order, he was charged by Pope Boniface the 8th with reconciling France and England, and having succeeded in his difficult mission, was created Cardinal. He was very loath to accept so high a dignity, and when he was admitted into the Pope's presence said: "Holy Father, why have you put upon me so heavy a load?" "God," was the answer, "has reserved a heavier one for you;" a prophetic insight into the future. This was in the year 1298. Although he often dissented from the opinions of Boniface, and expressed his opinions with perfect frankness, the Pope esteemed him very highly, admiring him all the more for it; and soon after created him Bishop of Ostia, and Dean of the Sacred College of Cardinals, and sent him as Legate into Hungary, to calm the discord which divided that kingdom.

The state of the Church at this time was very alarming. The Turks, those old enemies of Christianity, gradually encroaching upon Eu-

rope, were already masters of Palestine, and only awaited a favorable opportunity to seize Constantinople. The Greeks bore a bitter hatred to the Catholic Church; while many European countries were a prey to internal dissentions and at enmity with the nations around them. Pope Boniface the 8th strove to unite all the Christian powers, in order to withstand the tide of Turkish invasion, and sent envoys from Rome to the different Christian kings, to pacify enmities among themselves, previous to a general attack upon the Turks. His motives were misunderstood, and his success but insignificant. Philip Le Bel, King of France, far from listening to the voice of the Pope, accused him of being an usurper and heretic, and charged him with many crimes. History has cleared his name, but his impetuosity of character, and austere views, sometimes caused him to push justice to its limits, and gained him enemies where he should have made friends. He deprived the French Universities of the right to confer degrees, withdrew from the king a privilege he had exercised of appointing to vacant benefices, and punished with censures those

ecclesiastics who did not go to Rome according to his orders. Angered by all this, Philip Le Bel convoked the States General, which refused to acknowledge the authority of Boniface, and appealed from him to a General Council, and to a future Pope.

William Nogaret, his envoy, together with Sciarra Colonna, a disaffected Roman noble, took the Pope prisoner in his palace at Anagni, and kept him in confinement three days, after which the inhabitants rescued him. Cardinal Boccasina and another Cardinal alone remained with the insulted Pontiff, while the rest of the Cardinals abandoned him. As soon as he was delivered Boniface set out for Rome, and died immediately on reaching the holy city, October the eleventh, 1303. The Cardinals entered into conclave, October 21st, eleven days after his death. This was the first time the rule was observed which had been established by Celestine the 5th, and confirmed by Boniface the 8th, that the Cardinals should not enter into conclave until nine days after the late Pope's death. The next day they elected Cardinal Boccasina Pope. He was very unwilling to accept this great

office, and only consented when it was represented that it was for the good of the Catholic Church. He took the name of Benedict, the baptismal name of his predecessor, Boniface the 8th, as a token of gratitude to him for all the favors and marks of esteem he had received from him; and adopted for his motto the text, "Illustra faciem tuam super servum tuum," "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant."—Ps. xxx. 17. He was solemnly crowned Pope, Sunday, Oct. 27th, 1303. The new Pope did not forget his humble origin, and on one occasion gave a very striking proof of the humility which led him to acknowledge it. His mother, although very old, went to see him at Perugia. When she arrived, some high-born ladies told her she would put him to shame if she appeared in her peasant's costume and gave her a rich and handsome dress, in which she went to the Pope's palace, and asked to see him. But when Benedict heard what had happened he would not receive her, saying: "It is not my mother if she is dressed in silk, for my mother is a poor woman who does not even know what silk is." When his mother heard this

she took off the costly dress and went to see her son in her peasant costume. He tenderly embraced her, and said: "This time it is indeed my mother."

At the time of Benedict's accession, Rome, like the rest of Europe, was full of sedition; one of the most powerful Roman families, that of the Colonnas, was in open rebellion. Two Cardinals of that family, James and Peter Colonna, had been degraded by Boniface, put under anathema, and all their possessions confiscated. Immediately on Benedict's election all dissatisfaction ceased. He pardoned the Colonnas, and took away the excommunication, but did not restore the two rebellious Cardinals to their rank, nor gave them their confiscated possession.

He then turned his peaceful policy towards those European nations which had incurred the enmity of Boniface. He was already well known to Philip Le Bel, King of France, who, while Benedict was Master General of the Order, had written to thank him for the prominent part he had taken in the canonization of Saint Louis, King of France, his grandfather; and in token of gratitude had

given him a large convent for Dominican nuns at Poissy, the birth-place of Saint Louis. It was also at his request that he had made peace with England. When Philip heard of his election to the chair of Saint Peter, he wrote a letter to him, full of confidence and respect. Benedict answered in these words: "Judge of our care for your salvation, and of our tenderness for you by the solicitude with which we have forestalled you, and by which we have given you what you did not ask for, viz., absolution from all the censures you have incurred. We do not regret having acted thus; for we are the Vicar of him who, in the parable, ordered his servants to go into all the by-ways, and force guests to enter and to fill his house. We have done the same; we have left the faithful sheep that we might search for the wanderers, in order to carry them home on our shoulder to the flock." The Holy Pontiff then begged him to remember that Joas, King of Juda, reigned gloriously only so long as he followed the advice of Joah, the High Priest; but having disregarded his advice, fell by the sword of his own

servants. "Listen, then," he continued, "to the voice of your father, lend an ear to his words, so that God in his goodness may deign to strengthen your reign and cover you with glory and prosperity in this world."

The holy and prudent Pontiff annulled the censures imposed on France by his predecessor, gave back the right of granting academic degrees, which had been taken away, and showed such a spirit of wise conciliation that in a few months everything was restored to the state it had been in before the lamentable quarrel had arisen.

He then turned his attention to other Christian countries, and pacified them also. He put down several abuses in Albania. In conjunction with Helena, Queen of Servia, he labored for the conversion of her infidel son Orose; removed the interdict from the Kings of Naples and Sicily; reconciled the King of Denmark to the Church, absolved him from excommunication and removed the interdict from his kingdom; pacified Tuscany; made peace between Venice and Padua; and all this in the space of a few months.

But he had not forgotten the danger the

Church was in from its most powerful enemies, the Turks. The Kings of Tartary, having been converted by the Dominican and Franciscan missionaries, had taken possession of part of Palestine, but not being able to retain what they had acquired, applied to the Pope for aid.

Benedict, therefore, after restoring peace to Europe, endeavored to organize a general crusade against the Ottoman power.

The Pope never forgot that he was a son of Saint Dominic, that it was in the retirement of the Dominican cloister that his character had been formed, and that all he had, he owed to his early training in sweet and chastening monastic discipline. He did not prove ungrateful, and in many ways showed his gratitude to his Order. Soon after his elevation to the papal throne he wrote a letter to all the Dominicans throughout the Christian world, recommending himself to their pious prayers. But he soon gave them a more substantial proof of his affection. Boniface the Eighth, his predecessor, had thought it necessary to restrain the rights and privileges of the mendicant orders. Benedict restored

them, careless of what blame it might seem to put upon Boniface's memory. Although the whole policy of the Pope had been one of reconciliation and peace, yet he could not allow the outrage which Boniface had suffered at Anagni to go unpunished, and issued a Bull against William of Nogaret and Sciarra Colonna, citing them to appear in person before him, which if they did not do he warned them they would be condemned by default. They did not listen to the Pope, upon which it would seem that God himself took vengeance upon them. The city of Anagni gradually declined, until in 1526 it was a heap of ruins. The three sons of Philip Le Bel all proved to be childless and succeeded each other as kings of France, within a space of fourteen years, leaving the French throne to the posterity of his brother, Charles de Valois, who had ever been the firm friend of Boniface. Rome, so ungrateful to the Popes, was soon abandoned by them for Avignon, and in their absence became almost a deserted city.

The few months that Benedict had sat on Saint Peter's chair promised that he would be

one of the most glorious pontiffs that had ruled the Church; but after only eight months and a few days God called him to his reward. He died at Perugia, July 7th, 1304, in his sixty-third year. A strong suspicion was entertained that he had been poisoned. According to Ferreto of Vincenza, a contemporary historian, Philip Le Bel bribed some of the Pope's attendants to mix poison with his food, and the Pope having suffered eight days' torment from the poison, which ate away his entrails, died in great pain.

His funeral was one of those touching testimonies of love, which the poor show to those who have been their benefactors. They remembered his kindness, charity, and tender care for their welfare, and knowing that they had lost a true friend, they followed his body to the tomb in great numbers. He was buried, according to his own desire, in the Church of St. Dominic at Perugia, and many miracles were worked at his tomb.

The Pontificate of Benedict 11th was very short, but it was one of the most glorious, if we consider his great virtues, his wisdom and moderation, which restored peace to the

Christian world, and the burning zeal he always showed for the salvation of souls. A lover and advocate of peace, he seems to have been placed upon the throne of Peter to establish it throughout the world, and when this, his sublime mission, was fulfilled, to have been quickly taken from it, to enjoy his glorious reward in the enjoyment of peace eternal.

Unfeignedly humble in the midst of honors such as none but Christ's Vicar upon earth could receive, he sincerely despised them, and looked upon them as mere passing dreams, unworthy of his serious attention, and loved rather to use the power and influence his exalted state gave him for the service of the poor and needy.

He continued all the practices of mortification and penance he had learned and practised in the Dominican cloister: he fasted often, and prayed and meditated in the long hours of the night, while the rest of mankind was asleep.

Pope Clement 12th authorized his cultus, in the year 1736, and allowed his feast to be kept in the dioceses of Treviso and Perugia, and by the Dominican Order throughout the world. The sons of St. Dominic keep his feast July 7th.

Prayer.

Ant. This saint is worthy to be had in remembrance by men, for he hath now passed to the joys of the angels.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed Benedict,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God, who by the grace of Thy benediction didst raise Blessed Benedict, Thy chief Bishop, to heaven, sanctify Thy people, we beseech Thee, with a new benediction of Thy grace, and through his prayers and merits, defend us by Thy power from all the evils that threaten us. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSED SIMON BALLACHI.

BLESSED SIMON BALLACHI.

November 3.

THE little town of San Archangelo, near Rimini, in Romagna, was Blessed Simon's birth-place. He was born about the middle of the thirteenth century, and at the age of twenty-seven, having learned the vanity of mere human pleasures, asked to be admitted into the Order of Friar Preachers, in the monastery at Rimini. Although he was the son of a nobleman, and the nephew of the Dominican Bishop of Rimini, he only begged the habit of a lay brother; moved to do so by a wish to imitate the humility of our Blessed Lord, who concealing His Godhead, became a little child, and the son of the humble virgin of Nazareth. He is also said to have had a brother, a Dominican priest, who after serving God worthily for thirty-five years, died a holy death, leaving a memory fragrant with the odor of many virtues.

Having received the habit, he began at once to acquire the spirit of a true lay brother of the Dominican Order, and soon became remarkable for his holiness. He forgot his rank in the world as completely as if he had never known it; he was never seen idle, never indulged himself in anything, however innocent it might be in itself, but worked the whole of the day, cheerfully and heartily, and when he had a few spare moments, spent them in prayer or meditation.

Although his love for prayer was very remarkable, he strove, first of all, to cultivate a habit of working, looking upon manual labor as his principal duty. It was his delight to work in the garden, which was put under his care. He undertook the most disagreeable services in the monastery, so that when a brother was appointed to any duty repugnant to human nature, he often found that the Blessed Brother Simon had forestalled him, and rid him of the unpleasant work.

So strictly did he fast that one wonders how he could undergo his severe bodily labors. He was known to have passed the whole of the forty days of Lent on bread and water, for five

years. But his obedience was such, that when the Prior told him he would render himself useless if he continued this penance, and that he ran the danger of being a burden instead of a help to the community, at once, without a word, he submitted. He always slept upon a board, and when he recalled the sins of his youth, took the discipline so vigorously, and for so long a time, that his blood fell upon the ground all around him. For twenty years he disciplined himself several times a week with a heavy iron chain.

Leading thus a life of innocence and mortification, dear to God and the wonder of all who knew him, it is only to be expected that the devil, the enemy of all the friends and servants of God, waxed wroth against him, and tried to rob him of the merits he had acquired. He made use of all the subtlety of his angelic, but fallen nature to deceive the humble Brother. Sometimes he beat him, like he had beaten Saint Anthony, sometimes he threw dust in his eyes, or crammed his mouth with filth to anger him, and at other times he threw him violently against the hard ground or dashed him against the corners of

the furniture to tire out his patience. He never once succeeded. He could not draw the saint from the sweet spirit of prayer, which gave him so unconquerable a power against his most dangerous temptations.

Blessed Simon had chosen the lowly and hidden state of a religious lay brother in his great humility of heart, not thinking himself holy enough to aspire to the priesthood and the care of souls; but his heart burned with as ardent a zeal for the honor of God and the salvation of sinners as burned in the hearts of the most zealous apostles. He knew that, although the lay brother is not engaged in working for the good of souls, like a priest, who, in his duties as preacher and confessor, gathers corn into the stores of his Master, yet he never forgot, that by working and attending to the wants of priests, he had a share, and not a small one, in all their labors for the salvation of souls. But he did more than this; he went out at times into the streets and lanes of Rimini, crucifix in hand, and gathered a group of little children around him, to teach them the rudiments of Christian doctrine. He sought out sinners, gently

reproved them for their vices and forgetfulness of God, and having softened their hearts by his earnest words, brought them back to God. His words were very simple and unstudied, but the holiness of his life, and much more so the merit of the penances and bloody disciplines which he offered to God for the conversion of sinners, gave them a force which softened the stoniest hearts. Thus, although he was but a lay brother, he gained the glory of the apostolate, and was as true and fervent a son of the apostolic Dominic, the founder of the Order of Preachers, as any of his most famous apostles.

He was very devout to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, and exceedingly zealous for the cleanliness and beauty of everything used in the service of the Church, one of the most certain marks of a truly God-loving soul. Old or soiled vestments he could never endure, and took great pains to clean and beautify all the ornaments of the Church.

He was gifted with the prophetical spirit, and honored by God, while yet in this life, with the power of working miracles. There was a certain doctor of medicine living in

Rimini, who became seriously sick. Sickness and entire loss of appetite having lasted three days, he sent for Brother Simon, who touched him with his hand, and health and appetite were immediately restored to him.

To the chaste Saint, St. John the Evangelist, he was particularly devout. He was accustomed to pray often before the statue of this saint in the church, and every time he prostrated before the statue in prayer a most delicious perfume was noticed by all around. In many other ways God manifested the holiness of this humble soul. One day, as he was praying, an angel, bright with the beauty of heaven, appeared, and sprinkling him with holy water, told him to fear the temptations and wiles of the devil no longer, for God was with him, and would always give him the victory.

Blessed Simon, having reached the age of fifty-seven years, became stone-blind, on account of the many tears he shed for his sins and for the conversion of sinners. But he was not at all discouraged, and continued to lead a life of intimate union with God in prayer and contemplation. At last his many

infirmities caused him to take to bed, where bearing all his trials with untiring patience, he was often visited by our Blessed Lord, surrounded with light. Saint Dominic and Saint Peter also appeared to him, telling him that they never ceased to pray to God for him. One day, as he was suffering from a very painful headache, St. Catherine the Martyr came to console him, and taking his right hand in hers, she touched his head, saying: "It is I, Catherine, whom you have so often called to your aid, and whom you have honored so much," and at once the pain ceased.

One day as the blind old man lay on his bed, trembling with fear for the account he must speedily render of his life to God, he heard a soft, sweet voice in the air, which said: "O Brother Simon, do not fear, for God is with thee and thou hast found favor in his sight." When the Fathers were thinking of building a new monastery in Rimini, in honor of the holy Mother of God, she deigned to appear to Blessed Simon, attended by Saint Catherine the Martyr, to tell him that the intention was pleasing to God.

At last, Blessed Simon died, full of years and weighed down with infirmities, laden with good works and the merits of a long and holy life. His soul left his body and fled to his Creator on the third of November, 1319. The crowd of people that assembled at the monastery as soon as his death was known, was so great that he could not be buried at once, as the Dominican Rule prescribes. His body was placed upon a bier, and laid in the church. His habit soon disappeared, every one cutting off a piece for a precious relic and the Fathers were obliged to clothe his body in another habit. On the third day after his death he was buried in the Dominican Church at Rimini.

His relics have often been translated, the last time in 1817, when they were placed in a chapel in the collegiate church at San Archangelo, his native town. His cultus was approved by Pope Pius the Seventh, who granted his feast and office to the whole Dominican Order, and to the diocese of Rimini.

Prayer.

Ant. Let your loins be girt, and lamps be burning in your hands.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed Simon,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God, who didst adorn Blessed Simon, Thy Confessor, with constant diligence in prayer, together with many other virtues, and a singular prerogative of humility, grant that we may so imitate him, that despising all the things of this world, we may seek Thee alone here, and hereafter attain the rewards promised in heaven to the humble. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSED ALBERT OF BERGAMO.

BLESSED ALBERT OF BERGAMO.

May 13.

THE life of this holy man teaches us that we can rise to a great height of sanctity, even while following our ordinary occupations; and that to be a saint it is not necessary to dwell in the cloister, but that all may attain holiness in whatever condition of life.

Blessed Albert was born at Villa-d-Ogna, near Bergamo. The exact date of his birth is unknown. He was piously educated, and was remarkable, even in his earliest years, for his natural goodness, and for his love of God. He fasted three times a week when he was only seven years of age, loved to hear Holy Mass, and to assist at all the services of the Church. He also began to practise acts of charity about the same age, and was often known to give away his own food to the poor.

His father and mother, who were poor, put him to work in the fields, and while he tilled

the ground he fed his soul with pious thoughts, and meditated upon holy things, and thus made very remarkable progress in Christian virtue. At a suitable age he married, but did not on that account lead a less holy life, nor diminish the alms he was accustomed to give to the poor, although his wife often reproached him for giving away more than he could afford. He listened patiently to her complaints, but ceased not to succor those who needed his help. He fed the hungry, and many were the poor orphans and pilgrims who received bounty from him. His charity was often rewarded by God with miracles: his store of provisions having been miraculously increased several times, so that while he assisted others in their necessities he himself did not want.

Notwithstanding this Divine assistance, his patience and confidence in God were severely tried. Some of his neighbors, who were rich and powerful, claimed the fields which he had inherited from his father, and succeeded in depriving him of them, thereby reducing him to a state of such poverty that he was forced to seek employment from others,

instead of cultivating his own land. Yet his charity and love for the poor were so strong that he found means to help them, and at the same time to provide for his own necessities.

He made two pilgrimages, one to Rome, and another to the shrine of Saint James at Compostella. On his journey he spread abroad the good odor of Christ, and wherever he passed, left behind him a reputation for holiness, especially for faith, simplicity, and burning zeal for the honor and glory of God. He worked his way as he went along, and miracles were again vouchsafed him by God.

He was once employed by a farmer to gather in the hay. Being anxious to gain enough to enable him to continue his pilgrimage, he worked much faster and better than his fellow-laborers. This aroused their jealousy, and to revenge themselves upon him, by hindering him in his work, they hid an iron anvil in the grass to turn the edge of his scythe, and thus to force him to rest awhile. Blessed Albert, quite unconscious of the hidden anvil, went on with his work, but when he came across it his scythe cut it in two, and he continued his work, to the aston-

ishment and confusion of his fellow-laborers, who became much ashamed of their jealousy, and humbly asked his pardon for the injury they had attempted to do him.

As he was returning from his pilgrimage he found the river Po so swollen with the rain that it was impossible to cross it. Full of simple trust in God, he made the sign of the cross over the waters, and spreading his cloak upon them, walked to the other side in perfect safety. Some hermits, who lived near the river, ran to question him, but he was silent, and went on his way, humbly rendering thanks to God.

This holy man became a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic. He died at Cremona, May 7, 1279. He devoutly prepared himself for death, by confessing his sins, and it is said when the priest carried the Most Blessed Sacrament to him a beautiful white dove descended from heaven, and took the Sacred Host in its beak and placed it on the tongue of the dying man. All the bells of the churches in the city rang by themselves when his happy soul went to meet its Creator. No human hand dug his grave in

the church of Saint Matthias, the angels coming from heaven to perform that pious work themselves.

Many miracles proved his sanctity, and he became very popular in Cremona. An altar was erected in the Church of St. Matthias, and a feast kept in his honor. In the year 1389 it was decreed that two large wax candles should be offered at his altar, at the expense of the city, and that a confraternity of laborers, which had been placed under his patronage, should keep his feast with great solemnity, and should distribute dowries to virtuous maidens belonging to the confraternity.

According to one author he was solemnly canonized by Pope John XXI., but as this afterwards seemed doubtful, his cultus was reconfirmed by Benedict XIV., May 9th, 1549. One of his arms was given to his native town of Ogna, where it is still piously venerated.

Prayer.

Ant. I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon a rock.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed Albert,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God, who wast pleased that Blessed Albert, Thy Confessor, should shine with singular sanctity in a lowly condition of life, grant that we may so tread in his footsteps as to be worthy to obtain his rewards. Through Christ our Lord.

BLESSED JAMES OF BEVAGNA.

BLESSED JAMES OF BEVAGNA.

August 23d.

IT must ever be a matter of regret that the original manuscripts of the Life of this holy servant of God have been lost; for the little which has been handed down to us is sufficient to show how holy he must have been.

In the year 1377, three-quarters of a century after his death, the town of Bevagna was taken by Conrad Trincius and put to the flames, when the monastery which Blessed James had built, and where he died, was destroyed with all it contained; and thus his Life, which had been written and preserved in the monastery archives, was lost. In the following year, however, a Dominican Father, Bonaventure Camasseus, set himself to re-write it from tradition, and from what he himself remembered to have heard when it was read.

Blessed James was born in the year 1220,

in the town of Bevagna, in Umbria. His father, John Blanchoni, and his mother Vanna, were of high rank, and distinguished for their genuine piety. At his birth, says an old writer, various wonders appeared in the heavens, for on the night in which he was born three moons were visible, in each of which the figure of a Friar Preacher was seen. In the day time, also, when the sun was shining, they were discernible for a long time, and a little boy began to cry out in the streets of the town, "To the schools, to the schools," and when questioned what he meant, said: "The Masters whom the world wishes to hear have come into the world." Now, about this time were born St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angel of the Schools, Blessed Ambrose of Sienna, and Blessed James of Bevagna. Many other signs were also given of his holiness: his mother, brother, and another person had prophetical visions of the child's future.

It was no wonder, then, that this child of God was educated with more than ordinary care. His parents, who were filled with the love of God and fear of his judgments, knew

well that a pious education is the best means to ensure happiness in this world as well as in the next, and they were also taught by many wonderful signs that it was necessary to give especial attention to his education. His youthful years were passed in happy innocence, and in the exercise of Christian virtues. In due time he was sent to school, and in his studies he made rapid progress.

When he was sixteen years old it happened that two Fathers of the Dominican Order came from the neighboring town of Spoleto, to preach the Lent in Bevagna. The pious youth went to hear them, and confessed to one of them, Father Peter by name. On Holy Thursday, when he was thanking Our Blessed Lord, who had come to dwell in his breast in Holy Communion, it occurred to him to open his Psalter, when his eyes fell upon these words: "Set before me a law, the way of Thy justifications, O Lord, and I will seek after it."—Psalm cxviii. 33. And when he read this he was suddenly inspired by God to renounce the pleasures of this world, and to enter the Dominican Order. He told Father Peter his desire. The Father said:

"Very good, my child; fast on bread and water to-morrow and we shall see if God will show anything to thee; spend the night in prayer, that your pious resolution may be confirmed by him." During the night Saint Dominic appeared to him, and said: "My son, carry out what thou hast in thy mind, for I have chosen thee by command of the Lord, and will always be with thee." He told this to Father Peter, and said he was fully prepared to make the sacrifice of himself to God in holy religion. After Easter he went to the Dominican monastery at Spoleto, and was joyfully received by the Fathers, and clothed in the Dominican habit. His father and mother, although pious, made an effort to hinder him, but after awhile, overcoming their natural repugnance to lose their beloved son, and fearing to oppose the holy will of God, made a willing offering of him to God.

He passed through his novitiate very fervently. He quickly subdued his passions and inclinations, learned to despise all earthly delights and honors, rose to a great height of virtue, and loved much to pray and medi-

tate, was never known to be sad or cast down, and with all his heart loved and practised the evangelical virtues of poverty, obedience and chastity. He was distinguished for study of the Holy Scriptures, which he carefully and devoutly read every day.

After his profession, he was sent to study at the monastery at Perugia. He learned everything necessary for his priestly labors in a very short time. During his studies he was very modest, and as humble as in his novitiate. His desire to walk in the steps of Saint Dominic led him to increase his penances, and in the night to lengthen his prayers. The time he thus snatched from sleep he passed before the altars, to obtain from the Father of mercies grace to labor efficiently for his own perfection, and for the salvation of souls. His superiors sometimes allowed him to add to the rigor of the Rule, because the spirit of the Lord worked in him so visibly, and his bodily strength seemed to increase just in proportion as he spared himself the less.

At the age of twenty-five he began to preach, thus following his particular attrac-

tion, which led him to labor for the increase of God's kingdom in the hearts of men. He always regarded preaching as the principal duty of the Dominican Order. It was the work of his life, although at several times he was occupied in teaching philosophy and theology, and was many times Prior in various convents.

Civil war had desolated the provinces and nearly all the cities of Italy. Blessed James viewed these calamities as a scourge with which God punished the sins of the people, and did not content himself with preaching penances alone, but likewise offered himself as a voluntary victim to divine justice. He practised most severe mortifications to appease the anger of God, and to draw down his mercy upon those sinners who seemed to despise him.

The Emperor Frederick the Second, who had been deposed by the first Council of Lyons, entered the States of the Church with an army and wreaked his vengeance more especially upon those towns which had stood firm by the Pope. Bevagna, in particular, felt his anger. He destroyed its walls

and sowed dissensions among its citizens, so that they seemed to wish to destroy all that he had spared. Those who remained faithful to the Holy See had not only to fight against enemies without, but found their own fellow-citizens their most deadly foes. In the midst of these misfortunes, heretics propagated their false doctrines and morals unopposed. Contempt of public laws seemed to accustom men to despise religion, and to trample under foot everything the most sacred.

The disciple of Christ, Blessed James, could not see the deplorable state of his native town with indifference; but the loss of souls grieved him more than temporal misfortunes. The fame of his virtues and his fervent sermons caused the most influential citizens to seek his advice, and in a short time he succeeded in reuniting those who had been at variance, persuaded them to league together against the enemies of their town and of religion.

Among the false religions by which Italy was then afflicted, that of the Nicolites, or Fratricelli, was perhaps the most dangerous. The Popes took the greatest precautions

against this error, but its followers still continued to disseminate the poison. This infamous sect, which violated the sanctity of marriage, and set at naught all laws of modesty, had already introduced itself into Umbria, and the inhabitants of Bevagna were infected by its doctrines.

Blessed James attacked the Nicolites publicly, and made many conversions. But he could not think he had completed his work as long as the leader of these deluded men continued in his errors. His name was Ortinelli. He went from town to town, preaching in secret, and because his doctrine favored all the corrupt desires of the flesh, and pandered to men's evil passions, he gained many disciples. He was a rich and powerful man, but secretly feared Blessed James, and always avoided him. Our saint, on the contrary, ardently desired to see him, with the hope of convincing him of his error, and, by the help of God's grace, to win him back to the bosom of God's holy Church; or, if he failed in this, at least to confound him publicly, so that his confusion might open the eyes of those who had been perverted by his preaching.

It happened according to his wishes, and beyond his expectations; for having learned, while away preaching a mission, that Ortinelli had appeared in the town of Bevagna, he returned there with all speed, and at last found the long sought for opportunity. Blessed James proposed a public discussion, which Ortinelli accepted. The most learned men of the town were the judges. Ortinelli promised, if he was convinced by Blessed James, not only to abandon his doctrines, but also to make a public reparation for all the evil he had caused, and to ask pardon and reconciliation with the Church. The saint on his part promised that he would at once recognize him as a true Catholic, if he did not show him clearly that his doctrines were no other than an ancient heresy, condemned by Jesus Christ, his apostles, and anathematized by the Church. The dispute was not long; nor was Ortinelli's defeat doubtful. Happily he had the courage and honesty to fulfil his promise. Several of his disciples followed his example, made a public abjuration of their heresy, and the sect became extinct shortly afterwards.

Everything which affected the glory of God, or the salvation of souls, was the object of Blessed James's zeal. But it led him chiefly to preserve and re-establish purity of faith and morals, in that part of Italy in which he had been born. He completely suppressed several superstitious customs, which had crept in among the inhabitants of Bevagna, and he resolved to build a monastery of his Order there. Friends and relatives warmly entered into his views, but after the severe losses they had suffered in the late wars, could not give all that was required to build a large monastery and church. His pious mother, and some of the citizens, could furnish but a small sum; sufficient only to purchase an unpretending house near the Church of St. George the Martyr, which church was soon after ceded to him, with its revenues, by the Chapter of Spoleto, to whom it had belonged.

Such was the beginning of what was afterwards a large monastery. He obtained several good Fathers, who were the companions of his labors in dedicating their lives and talents to the work of combating heresy and vice, and working hard to restore the practices

of Christian piety among the inhabitants of the town. This community was a model of the most exact regularity, a school of fervent penance, and the home of a number of self-sácrificing apostles.

After founding his own monastery, Blessed James wished to establish a community of nuns in Bevagna. There was a holy widow in the town, called Lucia, rich in the goods of this world. She consulted him as to the best way of using her riches, having no relations in need of it. He answered that it would be a work very pleasing to God, and most beneficial to her fellow-townsmen, if she founded a convent of nuns. His advice was followed, and she entered the community herself. It was under the rule of St. Benedict.

Blessed James was Prior in various monasteries, and always filled that office with prudence and firmness. If his words were all-powerful to animate the religious to virtue, and to the exercise of religious observance, the example of his own life was yet more edifying. He scarcely slept, chastised his body three times every night with rude disciplines, and wore an iron chain round his waist, which en-

tered so deep into his flesh that it was afterwards impossible to draw it out. He fasted on bread and water on Fridays, and on other days his food was the poorest in the monastery.

There was nothing cold or repulsive about his piety. Austere to himself, but loving and gentle to others, ever cheerful and joyful in his conversations, warm-hearted, full of affection for every one. The following anecdote shows us how merry he could be, even when he thought it necessary to administer a reproof. One day, going from Spoleto to Bevagna, he was received in the house of a peasant at Berotti, where the Dominican Fathers, passing that way, were accustomed to seek hospitality. In the evening this man returned from his work in the fields, much fatigued, and sitting at the fire with his sons and daughters, of whom he had many, he saw Father James and his companions, standing a little distance from the fire, to whom he said: "Reverend Father, I have heard that you know everything, and can do all things. I wish you to teach me something, viz., what I must do so that I and my family, and also

the strangers who come here sometimes, may all be able to stand around the fire, for in cold weather strangers will never give way to anybody.

Blessed James laughing, said: "What you ask pleases me much. Have you any vine stubble or twigs." The man said that he had. Then said Blessed James, "Bring me three or four bundles of them." When brought he put them on the fire, which flamed up brightly, so that all were obliged to draw away from it on account of the heat. Then Blessed James said: "Let us all sit down around the fire; there is room for all, for when the fire is large it warms those who are a long way off, which a little fire cannot do." But the man had expected a miracle, and said: "I knew all that well enough, and looked for something more from you." Blessed James then said: "If you knew that, why did you not do it? But there is another means which will prevent your children from needing to sit at the fire; it is to give them thick shoes, and to put warm clothing on their backs. We must not ask miracles when nature can give us what we need," and then taking occasion from this little incident, preached to them the Word of God.

There is no language to express the perfection of his purity, which was more than virginal. His humility, which appeared in all his other virtues, seemed almost to run to excess. The innocence of his life, the rigor of his penances, and his good works, far from causing any pride in him, increased still more the fear of God in his heart, and he often trembled lest he should be numbered among the reprobate.

God gave him the power of working many miracles. Andrew Blanchoni, his eldest brother, was miraculously delivered from prison by his prayers, when he had been taken in battle and condemned to death.

Many sick and dying were suddenly cured by invoking his name, or by the water in which he had washed his hands. Bread and wine increased in his hands for the support of the workmen engaged in building his monastery, and oil, which he had blessed, cured many bodily diseases.

He once asked his mother to give him some money to buy clothes, and having obtained it he went to Perugia, and there purchased a large crucifix and a statue of the Blessed

Virgin with the money. When he put this crucifix in the church at Bevagna, his mother said to him: "Why hast thou told me a lie? You asked for money to buy clothes, and have bought a crucifix instead." "My dear mother," he said, "it was not a lie, for Christ is our clothing, as said the Apostle, 'let us put on our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

Now, when he was praying one day before this crucifix, he began to fear for his salvation and said: "O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast deigned to clothe Thyself with the covering of our mortality, I beseech the fulness of Thy Infinite Majesty at least to reveal, and to deign to show me by some sure sign whether the flowing of Thy precious Blood will be the cause of my salvation, that I may be among Thy elect and Thy predestined ones."

Then our Lord spoke to him from the cross and said: "May this Blood be a sign to thee." And immediately blood and water flowed from the side of the figure on the cross, and fell on his face and habit. Three drops trickled down upon his lips, and tasted so sweet and were so fragrant, that an earnest yearning to be dissolved and to be with Christ took possession of his soul.

The end of his life approaching, our Divine Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, accompanied by his holy Mother Mary, Saint Dominic, and Saint George, to whom he had a special devotion, appeared to him on the feast of the Assumption. Our Lord said: "Put your house in order, for we shall come to lead you to the happiness of heaven. I have already sprinkled you with my blood for a sign of your predestination, and because you have given the price of your clothes for my image and for an image of my Mother, because you have clothed yourself with the habit of Saint Dominic, and enlarged the Church of Saint George, therefore we will be present at your death." Then the vision faded away, leaving Blessed James full of sweet consolation.

The octave day of the Assumption having come, Blessed James called the Brothers together, and exhorted them to live for God alone, in the constant exercise of fervent prayer, in charity towards all men, and in great humility. Then he received Extreme Unction, and said to the Brothers: "I thirst, my dear Brothers, I thirst." And then, "Go," he said to one who stood near, "and

draw forth water from the well of the Church, for I wish to drink with the Brothers for the last time, for I shall drink no more with them."

When the water was before him he blessed it with these words: "May the Giver of all good things bless the drink of his servants," and immediately it was turned into good red wine. All who stood around saw the miracle. But not being sufficient for all, he sent for more, a second and a third time, and each time the miracle was repeated. When all had drank, many religious and secular persons being present, he said: "This miracle was not worked for me, but for you, that you may know that the arm of the Lord is not shortened." And afterwards he said to them: "Farewell, my dearest Brothers, farewell in the Lord. Behold! I see my patron Saints, and the Patron Saint of this monastery, coming for me. I see Our Divine Lord, Mary, my dearest Mother, and the Blessed St. Dominic, and St. George, according to their promise." And raising his eyes to heaven he said: "I thank Thee, Lord Jesus Christ, because Thou hast deigned to come to

Thy servant with these holy Saints, according to Thy word." And having said this, he slept in the Lord.

Now, as the Brothers were making the customary recommendation of the departed soul, they distinctly heard a voice, which said: "Pray not for him, but ask him to pray to God for you."

What was left of the wine was preserved in the Convent at Bevagna for over 200 years, when it was spilled by some heretical soldiers, who pillaged the convent. Many miracles had been worked by it. Although small quantities had often been extracted, it never decreased.

Blessed James died on the octave of the Assumption, August 22, 1301, in the 82d year of his age. His body has been preserved incorrupt, and four times has been translated, in the year after his death, again in 1405, a third time in 1555, and lastly in 1589.

The many miracles which have been wrought by his intercession are a proof of his sanctity. They include the raising of two persons from the dead. His cultus was solemnly confirmed by Pope Boniface the Ninth

in the year 1400. Indulgences were granted to those who visit his tomb on the three first days of May. In the sixteenth century Cardinal Bellarmine wrote a full account of his heroic virtues, and collected some of the most wonderful miracles with a view to his canonization. In 1610 Paul the Fifth published a Bull to add more solemnity to his cultus, in which he gave him the title of Saint, which Boniface the Ninth had already done two centuries before. In 1674, Clement the Tenth ordered that his feast should be kept on the 23d of August at Bevagna, and in the whole Dominican Order. He also granted several indulgences to a confraternity at Bevagna, under the invocation of Saint Dominic and *Saint* James of Bevagna. However, he has not yet been solemnly canonized.

Blessed James is numbered among the long list of Dominican authors. He wrote two works, "The Mirror of Sinners," and a treatise, "On the Humanity of Jesus Christ," both of which still remain in manuscript.

Prayer.

Ant. I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon a rock.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed James,
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God, who by the miraculous sprinkling of Thy Blood wast pleased to strengthen Blessed James, Thy Confessor, with a sure confidence of his eternal salvation, enlarge the same bowels of mercy towards us, that being marked with the sign of our redemption, we may be counted amongst the sheep at Thy right hand forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSED AMBROSE OF SIENNA.

BLESSED AMBROSE OF SIENNA.

March 22d.

ONE evening in the year 1220, the inhabitants of the little town of Bevagna, near Spoleto, in Italy, were astonished to see three half moons in the heavens, each one containing the figure of a Dominican Friar. This wonderful vision was also seen the next day at noon-time, and drew a crowd into the street. While they were looking at the strange sight a little boy cried out, "To the schools, to the schools!" and when he was asked the meaning of his words, he answered that the three Dominican Friars who appeared in the sky were destined by God to enlighten the Church by their teaching and doctrine. This legend, which is found in all the old lives of Blessed James of Bevagna, was interpreted of him, of Saint Thomas Aquinas, and of Blessed Ambrose of Sienna, who were all born about the same time. Blessed Am-

brose and Blessed James were born in the same year in which the apparition happened, but St. Thomas not until five years later.

Blessed Ambrose was born at Sienna, April 16, 1220. His father's name was Bonatacha, or "Good Fame," and he was so called on account of his honorable conduct. He was of the noble Siennese family of the Sansedoni. His mother, Justina, came from the Stribellino family, of the same city. He was deformed, and so ill-shaped, his arms growing into his body and his legs and feet so twisted together, that no one could look upon him without pity. On this account he was confided to the care of a nurse, called Flora, who lived near the Roman Gate of the town. One day as she stood near the door of her house, holding him in her arms, a pilgrim passed by. She covered the child's face to prevent its being seen, but the pilgrim, observing her do so, said to her: "Do not hide the child's face, for one day it will be the light and ornament of this town."

When Ambrose was about a year old Flora used to take him with covered face to the Dominican Church of St. Mary Magdalene,

where, after hearing Mass, she usually went to pray for his recovery before the relics of that holy Saint. Flora noticed that the child never cried when she prayed before these relics, but always when she left them. One day, as she was going out of the church, little Ambrose began to cry so lustily and gave such unmistakable signs that he wished to be taken back to the relics, behaving in so unusual a manner, that the people in the church advised her to follow the child's wishes. When they reached the reliquary, to the astonishment of all, Ambrose stretched forth his arms, which till then he had not been able to move, and cried out in a loud voice three times the holy name of Jesus, and immediately his limbs lost their deformity, became well-shaped, and his face quite beautiful. This miracle took place in presence of several people and Dominican Fathers. Many persons went to see the child after this miracle, and it was always noticed that when members of any religious Order came near him he smiled at them, and reverently bowed his little head three or four times, but when others went to see him he looked at them very demurely, as if he did not care much about them.

This was but the beginning of many remarkable infantine signs of sanctity. Thus, while his companions passed their time in building castles and making little horses and knights, Ambrose set up altars with crosses, and loved to kneel before them with folded hands, as if absorbed in prayer. He adorned oratories, sang hymns in honor of God, gathered his playmates together, ranged them in order, and made devout processions with them; in a word, imitated all he saw done in the churches. He was so fond of books that his pious mother dared not say the hours of the Office of the Blessed Virgin out of a book in his sight. He was never content until he obtained every book he saw, and if refused would lay awake the whole night, so that to pacify him they were obliged to take a book and put it in his hands, when he immediately ceased to cry and went to sleep. His father, who was a skilful illuminator, made him two little books, containing the letters of the alphabet. One was illustrated with miniatures of famous men of the time, the other with pictures of saints. The child at once refused the first, but eagerly took the second, and,

quite contrary to what could have been expected, liked the letters better than the pictures. Little things, no doubt, but which show us the tone and bent of his youthful mind. He was never tired of talking about God, and especially loved to hear the history of the early Christian martyrs. He also took delight in learning prayers and texts of holy scripture. At the age of seven, he said the Little Office of our Blessed Lady daily, and soon after made himself a rule of life, very perfect for one so young. He fasted on the eves of great feasts, and rose every midnight to say the prayers he had learned by heart.

He took great pleasure in entertaining poor pilgrims passing through the town, and asked his father's permission to furnish a room, in which he lodged five of them every Saturday. He went to the town gate to await their arrival, led them to the house and washed and kissed their feet, with great humility and tenderness. On the morrow he took them to hear Mass in one of the churches, after which they all went together to pay a visit to the shrines of the town; and when ready to set

out again on their journey, he made them a present to help them upon their way. Many years afterwards, in speaking to the Dominican Fathers in praise of alms deeds, he told them that one night, after having entertained some of these pious pilgrims, five beautiful angels appeared to him in his sleep, singing sweet hymns in honor of charity, and invited him to join them in their melody. He sang with them for some time, and then heard a voice which said: "Behold! the pilgrims whom thou hast received with such charity now re-visit thee," and then all vanished.

Every Friday he went to the prisons to console with holy conversation those who were detained there, and on Sundays, after Vespers, he usually walked to the hospitals to visit the sick. His father and mother desired him to join in the ordinary amusements of the rich youths of the time, such as hunting and hawking, but he steadily refused, and told them he wished to live for God alone. When he was old enough they tried to persuade him to marry, but could not. He loved chastity and decided to preserve it perfect and unsoiled throughout life. The devil,

who saw the fair white lily of chastity, fed by the nourishing dew of humility, growing apace in his young heart, tried to destroy the beautiful flower by stirring up the scorching fires of earthly desires within his breast. Ambrose often went to the Cistercian Abbey of St. Michael, on the road from Sienna to Florence. He frequently spent a few days in the society of the good Fathers, who knew his virtue and loved him much. He had made a rule for himself always to decline invitations to marriage feasts, fearing the slightest thoughts against chastity. One day, not being able to refuse an invitation of this kind, he set out for the abbey to get out of the way. As he was walking along the high road the old and crafty enemy of souls, under the form of a religious, accosted him, asked an alms, and when he had received it, under pretext of religious conversation, tried to incite in the bosom of the chaste youth the desire to marry, praising the joys and comforts of the married state in glowing terms. At first, Ambrose did not perceive his intention, but when the pretended monk revealed his true design, Ambrose made the holy sign

of the cross and the devil vanished. When arrived at the abbey the monks saw that something unusual had happened, and questioned him as to the cause of his agitation. When they heard from his trembling lips the temptation to which he had been subjected, they comforted the poor youth, and bade him take courage and trust to the merciful help of God, never denied to those who seek it. He remained several days with the Fathers in great fear, lest his victory should be to him a temptation to spiritual pride.

At Montelicito, about three miles from Sienna, there was a house of the hermits of St. Austin, dedicated to the Holy Saviour. Between this monastery and the town was a large forest, in which Ambrose loved to walk. The solitude was favorable to pious thoughts, and he found that he could meditate and read spiritual books there with great fruit to his soul.

One day, walking along in the cool shade of the trees, thinking of the salvation of his soul, he heard a piteous cry near him. He looked around, saw no one; but when the cries continued he hurried towards the place

from whence they seemed to come, and after a while, deep in the wood, he found a beautiful young girl, dressed in men's clothes. On seeing him she ran towards him, and claimed protection. Ambrose drew back instinctively; he always shunned the slightest contact with women. "I pray you help me," the temptress said; "I am a young lady of rank of Sienna. My father and mother are both dead. My brothers, wishing to secure my fortune for themselves, tried to persuade me to enter a convent,and when I refused, attempted to force me into a life for which I feel no inclination. I was, therefore, obliged, as you see, to disguise myself and fly. Unhappily I have lost my way in these woods. I beseech you take me back to Sienna, and interest yourself in my behalf." "I will not abandon you," answered the holy youth, who could refuse no one who asked a boon from him; "but were I to take charge of you myself we should lose our good name; so I will return to Sienna and send some one to you, and will see that your brothers molest you no longer."

As he turned to go, the pretended orphan threw herself passionately in his way, and

with tears in her eyes besought him not to leave her, declaring she would have no other guide than him, and became so demonstrative in her protestations of affection, that his eyes were opened and he saw that it was another wile of the evil one to cause him to fall into sin. Again he made the sign of the cross, and quickly fled the spot.

At seventeen he communicated his intention of entering the Dominican Order to his father and mother, who, after all the signs of sanctity they had perceived in him, could not refuse their consent. They not only put no hindrance in the way, but at his request gave him money to dispense in charity. He distributed it to the poor of the town, and to several young girls for a dowry, to enable them to contract virtuous marriages. It is said when he explained to the Prior and several of the Fathers of the Dominican convent his desire to enter their holy Order, they gave thanks to God, who had sent them such a treasure, and cried out in so loud a voice, in the words of holy writ, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord," that the other Fathers and Brothers who

were studying in their cells, hearing the voices, ran quickly to the spot to see what had caused so much joy. He made a spiritual retreat of ten days to learn the holy will of God in solitude and prayer. After which he was clothed in the Dominican habit on his seventeenth birthday, April 17, 1237. In the following year he made his profession. After he had taken his vows he spent several years in study and in the fervent practice of all monastic virtues, after which his Superiors sent him to Paris, to finish his studies under Blessed Albert the Great, who was in that city, with his famous disciple St. Thomas Aquinas. Ambrose set off on his journey with two companions, Bros. Oderic Francigero and Denis of Viterbo. On his way he was seized with fever and obliged to take to his bed in one of the villages through which they had to pass. One day during his illness, a venerable looking pilgrim begged an alms from the Brother in attendance, and having been told of Ambrose's sickness, said he had a sure remedy for his complaint. The simple young religious took him to the bedside of the patient, saying that he had brought a

pilgrim who had come to cure him. Ambrose joyfully raised himself in the bed to welcome the supposed religious, but felt an inward repugnance as soon as he saw his visitor, and was much afraid. The pilgrim began to talk, and tried to persuade Ambrose not to continue his journey, saying that his studies in Paris would undoubtedly end in failure, and when he saw his persuasions were of no effect, stretched out his hands on the bed, pretending to cure him. But Ambrose, fearing some illusion, and not liking his appearance, made the sign of the cross, which twice before had delivered him from great temptations, and immediately the pilgrim, or rather the evil one, who had taken a human form, vanished. The two Brothers who stood nigh fell to the ground from fear, while the men of the house, hearing the noise, ran to the place, but dared not enter on account of the evil perfume which the enemy of souls had left behind him. Two days after Ambrose recovered, and set out again on his journey.

The year of his arrival in Paris seems uncertain, yet as Blessed Albert, with his pupil,

St. Thomas Aquinas, did not arrive there until October of the year 1245, it would seem likely that it was somewhere near that time.

Being under so learned a master as Albert the Great, Ambrose made great progress. In due time the degree of Bachelor in Theology was offered him in recognition of his talents, but from humility he declined it, and asked to be allowed to devote himself entirely to the work of preaching. After some time spent in apostolic labors, he begged to retire into a secluded monastery, there to refresh his spirit and enrich his mind with more ample treasures of Holy Writ. He was also employed about this time in teaching Holy Scriptures to the novices of the convent. When he was at Paris he wrote several theological treatises, but never published them; he thought it would savor of presumption to do so, seeing that St. Thomas was teaching in that convent. He said that the writings of St. Thomas were the works of a more than human hand, and always showed the warmest admiration for them.

In the year 1248 he was sent to Cologne, in Germany, with St. Thomas, to teach the-

ology in the Dominican schools. While there he learned German, and preached in that language. Whole families of heretics were converted by his sermons, and miracles were not wanting to attest the sanctity of the preacher and the truth of his doctrine. Several times the Holy Ghost, under the form of a pure white dove, was seen hovering around him, as if whispering in his ear what he was to preach.

The state of Germany at that period was very lamentable; rent and torn by internal factions, it offered an easy prey to heresy. After the deposition of Emperor Frederick by the first Council of Lyons, and more especially from the time of his death to the year 1273, when Rudolph of Hapsburg ascended the throne, Germany had been agitated by divisions and revolts. Vice flourished unchecked—the whole state seemed corrupt; and what was saddest of all, the good example of the clergy, which alone could have stayed the general depravity of morals, was, alas! wanting. In the midst of this miserable state of affairs a new sect arose. In the year 1248 some heretical preachers began openly to

preach in the town of Halle, in Suabia, many errors and false doctrines, such as, that the Pope in reality was a heretic, all Bishops, simonaics, every ecclesiastic a seducer of the people, and that priests were deprived of all authority to bind and to loose on account of their sins. They said that they alone were the friends of virtue, the only possessors of the true faith, and claimed the sole right to give valid absolution.

Blessed Ambrose preached against this heresy with great success. The heads of the sect challenged him to a public disputation; he did not refuse, and argued with them so sweetly and charitably, seeking rather the salvation of their souls than their discomfiture, and his arguments were so strong, his patience, mildness, and holiness so winning, that many gave up their errors, and were restored to the bosom of the Catholic Church. Others, however, deaf to all holy inspirations and to the light of reason, remained in their heresy, and it is said attempted his life several times. He feared them not, and continued to preach, until at last the people became so convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith, that

they returned in great numbers into the fold of Christ, and in several villages chased away the heretical preachers.

The next field of his labors was the kingdom of Hungary. This country, in the year 1260, was threatened with a Tartar irruption. Pope Urban 4th, fearing the advance of these enemies of Christianity, wrote to the Princes and Bishops, begging them to take the surest and best means within their reach for resisting the invasion. Ambrose, at the head of several other fervent and holy priests, traversed the country, preaching repentance to the people, reconciling enemies, and animating all to make common cause against the enemy. The Tartars were repulsed with the enormous loss of 52,000, and Hungary was saved.

He was also employed in several other affairs of importance to Church and state. One of these must have been peculiarly pleasing to him: it was to reconcile Sienna, his native town, to the Pope. The Siennese had taken up the cause of the excommunicated and deposed Emperor Frederick, the enemy of the Church, who had been excommunicated

by Pope Clement 4th, in the year 1266. This punishment, deserved by disobedience and obstinacy, not only fell upon the guilty, but also upon the many good and pious Catholics of the city. They prayed, fasted, and gave alms to appease the anger of God, and employed various princes to be their mediators with the injured Pope, but all having proved fruitless, they bethought themselves of Ambrose, and sent two of the Dominican Fathers of Sienna to beg him to intercede with the Pope for them. He accepted this office of peace-maker, and set off for Sienna. Having arrived in the town, a deputation of citizens waited upon him, and gave him full power to treat with the Pope in their name. But Ambrose, before setting out, preached to the people, and succeeded in reconciling all who were at enmity, and restored the whole city to one state of mind. He was completely successful in his mission and obtained from the Holy Father a full pardon and removal of the interdict and excommunication, also a renewal of all the privileges they had lost by their revolt against the authority of the Holy See.

Forgetting the Pope's mercy, they cast off their allegiance a second time, and the interdict having been renewed, they applied to Father Ambrose, who accepted the office of intercessor, although their ingratitude made it a much more difficult task. Pope Gregory 10th was holding his court at Viterbo. Ambrose went and sought an audience. He did not attempt to excuse his fellow citizens, but pleaded the cause of mercy so eloquently that the Pope at once pardoned them. Some authors assert that when he entered the Pope's presence, his face appeared as if on fire with a supernatural light, which the Pope seeing, felt himself so strongly drawn to pardon the Siennese, that before Ambrose could explain his mission, he cried out: "Father Ambrose, it is not necessary for you to explain your errand. I grant all you wish to ask from me." In gratitude for this great benefit, the inhabitants of Sienna instituted a feast to commemorate the event, and celebrated with great pomp a religious procession and solemn High Mass.

He also brought about a happy reconciliation between Conrad, grandson of the Em-

peror Frederick the Second of Germany, and Pope Clement 4th.

This young prince entered Italy with a large army, subdued Lombardy, Tuscany, and a part of the states of the Church. He even entered Rome, and the Pope was forced to retire to Viterbo. Elated by success, Conrad slighted the ecclesiastical censures which were laid upon him, but his army having been cut into pieces by Charles First, King of Sicily, in a battle, August 23, 1268, he was taken prisoner, led to Naples, and condemned to death. During his imprisonment the unhappy young man entered into himself, repented of his disobedience to the Holy See, and obtained Father Ambrose to be his intercessor with the Pope. Always ready to work for the good of the Church, and for the salvation of souls, Ambrose sought the Pope's presence, and spoke so forcibly that the Pope, turning to the bystanders, said: "I say to you, Father Ambrose, that I desire mercy and not sacrifice," and added that it was not the voice of Ambrose which they had been listening to but the Holy Ghost speaking through him. He then removed all the censures from the

young prince, and restored him to favor. Unfortunately for Conrad, King Charles was not equally merciful, for he caused the sentence of death to be carried out soon after the Pope's pardon. These marks of confidence caused Ambrose to be regarded as a man of public utility, and when the Episcopal See of Sienna became vacant he was elected Bishop of that town, in which, as we have already said, he had been born, and to which he had given so many marks of affection. But although Pope Clement 4th wished him to accept the dignity, Ambrose declined. About this time he was also employed in preaching the Crusade, which he did with such success that in a very short time a numerous army was on foot for the recovery of the holy sepulchre. Pope Gregory 10th requested him to re-establish the college of studies in the Dominican convent in Rome. The late wars and the absence of the Papal Court from Rome had caused a sad falling off in the studies, but more peaceful times having succeeded to the previous disorders, the Pope wished him to live in Rome, and to revive the former flourishing courses of philosophy,

theology and other branches of sacred science. He did so, and lectured on theology with great success; but at the same time did not neglect to preach, not only to the people, but also to the Cardinals then in Rome. He reprehended them with fearless freedom, especially for having allowed the Apostolic See to remain vacant for nearly 3 years, which had been a great injury to the Church, and a scandal to the weak ones of Christ.

After the death of Gregory 10th, he retired into solitude, so long broken by his public duties. The virtues of monastic life shone forth in him with marvellous beauty throughout his life, even when his duties called him from the loved quiet of the cloister into the busy world, but more especially when he was leading the life of prayer and meditation he loved so much in the retirement of the monastery.

This will be a fitting place to give an account of his virtues. All his biographers say that if his life be carefully studied it will be found to be a series of examples of perfect humility. The virtue of the Saint of Saints was the motive of his whole life, and the

foundation of all his virtues, especially of his spotless chastity.

On account of his extensive and profound learning he was much esteemed, but the more he was honored the more he fled from praise. He often swept the cloisters and dormitories of the convent. It sometimes happened in a theological discussion that his opponent became angry, but Ambrose always calmed him with sweet words, and although he himself had committed no fault against charity and brotherly love, begged his pardon, as if he had been in the wrong; and lest charity should be lost, though for a very brief time, he was always very unwilling to take part in such discussion. He never went to the altar to say Mass, or for any sacred function, until he had examined his conscience, to see if he was in perfect charity with every one, and if he thought he had done or said anything which could in any way have hurt the feelings of those among whom he lived, he always begged pardon, although it was seldom that any one could find the slightest cause of offence against him.

He loved holy poverty dearly, and prac-

tised it perfectly. He always made his journeys on foot, even as delegate of the Pope. In the convents in which he lived, or to which he paid a visit, if he saw one of the community remarkable for purity and simplicity, he would frequently talk with him, rejoicing much in the humility he saw in him, taking greater pleasure in his society, though he might be a lowly lay Brother, than in the polished ease of more learned men.

The afflicted and troubled in mind continually went to him for consolation, to whom the holy man was wont to say: "In me there is no remedy, but as the Holy Scripture observes, 'Our God is our refuge and strength, a helper in troubles, which have found us exceedingly, therefore we will not fear.'—Ps. xliv. 1, 2. Do not weep on account of your troubles, but put your whole trust in God's love, and in the hopes which he gives to all Christians in his consolations, whenever with perfect love they come to him. It is written, 'The Lord is my helper. I will not fear what man can do unto me.'"—Psalm cxvii. 6. He would then listen patiently and with sympathy to all their troubles, advise them, and

send them away light of heart, trusting in God.

He observed all the austerities of the Dominican Order, eating meat but once during the whole time he was a religious, and then only under necessity; fasting on bread and water every Friday. He slept but four hours, and always in his habit. After matins he remained two hours in prayer in the choir, and then he studied till daylight. He said the little hours on his knees, and took the discipline at the end of the Divine Office. Day and night he wore a hair shirt, and a large plate of lead upon his loins. He seldom drank wine, and then only in small quantities. He is said to have had the gift of prophecy and Father Vincent of Aretino, a Dominican Friar who accompanied Ambrose on his apostolic journeys, says that he saw him several times raised from the ground in ecstacy.

He was a very remarkable and apostolic preacher. Timid and hesitating in ordinary conversation, when in the pulpit he was as bold as a lion. He denounced vice fearlessly and with holy freedom combated heresy, usury, and the other sins prevalent at that

period. His sermons were collected, but have been lost. He preached much, but wrote little, and one of his biographers says that he had but limited talent for literary composition; that when he wrote he showed great disregard for style, and that there were no signs in his works of the elegance of language so lavishly displayed in his sermons.

Of his learning we have already spoken, but we may give here the testimony of one of his biographers, who asserts that Ambrose appeared like a psalmist, when he treated of the psalms, like a prophet when he took the prophecies in his hands, like an evangelist among the holy evangelists, an apostle with the apostles, and a true philosopher among philosophers. To overcome the errors of the day, he made use of sound philosophy. In his sermons, he illustrated doctrine by familiar examples taken from occurrences of every day life, after the example of his Divine Master.

We have also spoken of his purity. He loved to praise that angelic virtue in his sermons; he frequently prayed for virgins, also for those about to marry, and so great

was the estimation in which he was held that many who were thinking of choosing a wife, consulted him about it, and after his death it became a pious custom for virgins to offer candles at his tomb, to obtain a good husband. He instituted various confraternities of men and women, to whom he gave the rules of his own Order. He desired to lead them to a more perfect observance of the life of prayer and penance. These confraternities, having been of much benefit in Sienna, were afterward introduced into other cities.

After several years spent in the happy solitude of a little-frequented monastery of his Order, Innocent Fifth sent him into Tuscany as Papal Legate, and employed him in restoring peace between Venice and Genoa, and between Florence and Pisa. In the latter city, when he had made all the necessary arrangements and everything appeared ready for the conclusion of peace with the citizens of Florence, the devil incited many to oppose him. Among them was one man, noted for the fierceness of his character, who went to the Saint, and poured out a

torrent of abuse, calling him a "deceiver of the people, full of pride and ambition, worthy only of death," which punishment, he added, "I shall most certainly inflict upon you unless you cease your practices." Ambrose heard him calmly, and replied that he was but the servant of the God of peace, and that his only wish was to put an end to the quarrels between Pisa and Florence. "If I have sinned," he said humbly, "I do not refuse to receive from you the punishment I deserve; I pardon you with all my heart what you have said; I would even pardon you my death, and I pray God not to judge you in his anger."

This man, as the old chronicler relates, was naturally cruel and fierce, having no fear of God in his heart, being filled with anger and revenge, no lover of peace but of discord. Although he was much enraged against the servant of God, yet when he heard the saintly words that fell from his lips he threw himself upon his knees and cried out: "Forget what I have said, O servant of God, and pray for me, that God may grant me true peace." This sudden conversion was sincere and last-

ing; he became a God-fearing man and a devout Christian.

In the beginning of the Lent of 1286, preaching in Sienna he so exerted himself in a sermon against usury, that he burst a vein in his chest, which discharged such a quantity of blood from his mouth that he was obliged to discontinue his sermon, and take to bed. The next day, the blood having ceased to flow, he wished to go to the church and continue his sermon, but it opened again, and he vomited so much blood that every one saw his end was near at hand.

To prepare himself for his passage to eternity, he made a general confession, in which his confessor did not remark a single sin which had deprived him of the grace of God, especially with regard to chastity, which he had always preserved most perfect.

After his confession he asked for the Blessed Sacrament, and when it was brought to him made a great effort to arise to receive it. Then he received the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, and said all the responses in a loud, clear voice. He bade the Fathers and Brothers not weep for him, and sitting up in bed he kissed them all, saying something

to each one. When his last moments arrived he was much pleased to behold the religious kneeling around his bed helping him with their fervent prayers. Being thus fortified by the Sacraments of the Church, and upheld by the prayers of his brethren, he raised his eyes to heaven and peaceably gave up his soul to God. It was in March 19th, 1286. He had completed his 67th year. He was buried in the Sacristy of the Dominican Church at Sienna. Many wonderful miracles were worked at his tomb. They became so numerous that the Bishop of Sienna asked Father Gregory of Icontris and Father Nicholas of Ricasole, both living in the convent of Sienna, to make a list of the most authentic. The abridgement of his life, written in Italian, gives no less than 180, among which is the resurrection of six persons to life.

Shortly after his death Pope Honorius the Fourth ordered four Dominicans, Fr. Gilbert, a disciple of St. Thomas, Fr. Recuperatus, of Petramala, Fr. Aldobrando de Paparoni, and Fr. Odoardo Bis-Domini of Sienna, to write his life, in order to proceed to his canonization. Political troubles, and other adverse circum-

stances hindered the process of his canonization, and for many years it was laid aside. In the year 1442, Pope Eugenius Fourth being at Sienna, the clergy and people petitioned him to take up the cause again; he promised to do so and allowed the citizens to celebrate a feast in honor of Blessed Ambrose, with the rite of a canonized Saint, in the Dominican Church. This feast was kept on the Friday before Passion Sunday.

Many Popes have granted plenary indulgences to those who visit his tomb on this day. Pope Gregory XV. allowed the whole Dominican Order to keep his feast on the 22d of March, and the Sacred Congregation of Rites inserted his name in the Roman Martyrology in the year 1577.

Prayer.

Ant. Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed Ambrose,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

May the votive solemnity of Blessed

Ambrose, Thy Confessor, rejoice Thy Church, O God, that it may ever be defended with all spiritual helps, and made worthy to be blessed with everlasting joys. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

The Life of the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas. Small Octavo, $1.00. 186 pp. D. & J. Sadlier & Co., New York.

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